CITY HILIGHTS

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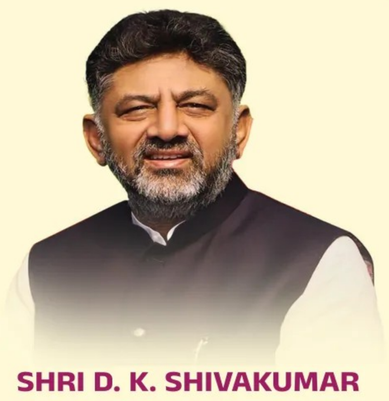
SHRI SIDDARAMAIAH
HONOURABLE CHIEF MINISTER



SHRI D. K. SHIVAKUMAR
HONOURABLE DEPUTY CHIEF MINISTER

Department of School Education & Literacy

ADMISSIONS ARE NOW OPEN FOR GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES.

You can enroll your children in any class.

This is the Government's
EDUCATION GUARANTEE

Karnataka Model School Education!!

3 In 3 years, ours will be the best government school system in the country!!!

FACILITIES PROVIDED BY THE GOVERNMENT TO ITS SCHOOLS:

Government schools offer more than free textbooks, uniforms, shoes, mid-day meals, and milk! **This year has seen a huge rise in results!! An even bigger improvement in government schools and colleges!!!**

8 STEPS FOR QUALITY EDUCATION
THESE ARE THE EDUCATION GUARANTEES.

Guarantee 1
No more teacher shortage: one teacher per class up to Grade 5, and subject-wise teachers from Grade 6 onwards.

Guarantee 2
Medium of instruction as parents prefer: Along with Kannada, English medium is available in all schools; teachers receive special training to teach in English.

Guarantee 3
Free transport facility: KPS students are provided free transportation.

Guarantee 4
Digital education: Computer learning from Grade 1 and AI from Grade 3; computer teachers will be appointed in all KPS Schools within 3 years.

IN THE 2025–2026 ACADEMIC YEAR
A HISTORIC RISE IN EXAM RESULTS.

SSLC Exam-1
94.10%

2nd PUC Exam-1
86.48%

Guarantee 5
Art and physical education: Dedicated teachers for music, art, and physical education; recruitment of physical education teachers begins this year.

Guarantee 6
Relief from non-academic work: Separate staff for non-teaching tasks; teachers can focus only on teaching.

Guarantee 7
Monitoring learning quality: Lesson Based Assessment system to track each child's progress, and mandatory parent–teacher meetings every two months.

Guarantee 8
Skill Education and Competitive Examinations training: Skill Education from Grade 6 and special coaching for competitive examinations.

When are these changes being introduced?

Some key changes will take effect starting this year itself, and you will begin to see the transformation within 2–3 years.

What is our five-year goal?

Our government school system will be the best in the country! **This is our guarantee!!**
Over 5 million children will enroll in government schools! **This is our resolve!**

We welcome all your suggestions

We seek everyone's support and welcome suggestions from education experts, organisations, and parents on this Karnataka model of education reforms. Your suggestions will help us improve our services and address internal and external challenges.

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Better learning
A Brighter future

What is the new KPS concept? Scan here!

To share your views and suggestions...

Email: edkarnataka@gmail.com | WhatsApp Number: 94489 99314

ShalaShikshanaKarnataka

QUICK READ

Case filed for obstructing census duty in Bengaluru

Bengaluru

A case has been registered against a resident for allegedly obstructing census duty and verbally abusing a female staff member in North City Municipal Corporation limits. The incident occurred at an apartment near Sultanpalya Main Road in R.T. Nagar. On April 20, enumerator Veena was denied information while conducting census work in Ward 43. During a follow-up visit on April 25, Circle-2 Supervisor R. Rashmi also faced non-cooperation and was allegedly abused. Following the incident, Census Charge Officer Dr. Lokesh filed a complaint. Municipal Commissioner Pommala Sunil Kumar confirmed legal action.

Ganja plants seized in excise raid at Nelamangala firm

Bengaluru

MLA S.T. Somashekar warned contractors that poor quality work will not be tolerated and those failing to meet standards will be blacklisted. He was speaking after launching rainwater drainage works at Chinmay School Cross in BDA Banashankari 6th Phase and a drain project near Munikallappa Thota in Kengeri. Emphasising quality, he said development works are being taken up daily in the Yeshwantpur constituency, but strict standards must be maintained. He directed contractors to prioritise durability in road and drainage projects. Several local leaders and officials, including BDA engineers, were present.

Doctors flag potential eye risks as GLP-1 generics enter market

BENGALURU

With generic versions of GLP-1 drugs set to enter the Indian market, ophthalmologists have raised concerns about possible ocular risks associated with their use, particularly among patients with diabetes.

A recent case highlighted the issue, where a 60-year-old woman with poorly controlled diabetes was prescribed a GLP-1 drug to improve blood sugar levels and support weight loss. While her initial response was positive, she developed sudden vision loss after eight to nine months and was later diagnosed with Non-Arteritic Anterior Ischaemic Optic Neuropathy (NAION), often referred to as an "eye stroke."

Minister warns hospital heads over drug shortage, ICU gaps, sanitation issues

Minister orders advance drug procurement to prevent shortages in hospitals

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Medical Education and Skill Development Minister Dr. Sharanaprakash R. Patil has issued a stern warning to directors of government-run hospitals across Karnataka, cautioning them of strict departmental action over recurring complaints of drug shortages, inadequate ICU facilities and poor sanitation.

Chairing a high-level review meeting at Vikasa Soudha, the Minister referred to observations by the Lokayukta and numerous public grievances regarding the non-availability of essential medicines in hospitals under the medical education department. He strongly criticised the practice of last-minute drug procurement, questioning why tenders are floated only after stocks are exhausted.

Directing immediate reforms, Dr. Patil instructed all hospital and medical college heads to initiate procurement processes at least three months in advance to prevent shortages that disrupt patient care.Addressing concerns over ICU bed shortages, the Minister sought an explanation from officials at Victoria

Hospital's trauma and emergency care centre. As an immediate measure, he directed Additional Chief Secretary Mohammed Mohsin and Director of Medical Education Dr. B.L. Sujatha Rathod to earmark an entire floor in the upcoming 10-storey Victoria Hospital building exclusively for ICU expansion. The facility is scheduled for inauguration by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on May 2.

Dr. Patil also expressed strong displeasure over poor sanitation standards and malfunctioning lifts in hospitals. He emphasised that maintaining clean washrooms is essential, stating that hygiene is a matter of basic human dignity and cannot be neglected.

The engineering wing was instructed to expedite pending infrastructure works, with a strict deadline set for completion of near-finished projects by the end of May. He made it clear that delays would not be tolerated.

Highlighting financial inefficiencies, the Minister criticised hospital administrations for underutilising funds under the Ayushman Bharat–Arogya Karnataka (AB-ARK) scheme. He noted that some institutions were claiming only about 60% of their eligible amounts.Stressing accountability, Dr. Patil said full utilisation of available funds is crucial for strengthening hospital infrastructure and improving healthcare services, warning that negligence in this regard would invite serious consequences.

Bengaluru police arrest 6 Coimbatore college students in dacoity case

BENGALURU

Bengaluru police have arrested six college students from Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, in connection with a dacoity case reported under Konanakunte police limits. The accused allegedly broke into a house in Pavamana Nagar on April 17, assaulted the occupants, and robbed cash, mobile phones, laptops, and a two-wheeler.Based on a complaint filed on April 18, police registered a case and traced the accused through investigation and informant inputs. A coordinated operation led to their arrest in Coimbatore.Police recovered two two-wheelers, four mobile phones, and two laptops worth around ₹3 lakh. The accused have been remanded to judicial custody.

'Living in the future': Foreigner's praise of Bengaluru goes viral

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

A foreign traveller's take on Bengaluru has gone viral on social media after he described the city as "the only place in India that's living in the future."

The traveller, identified as Jack Heaton, shared a video during his recent visit to Karnataka, where he documented his experiences exploring the state. As part of a broader journey, he is travelling across India to rank states based on his personal experiences.In the video, Heaton praised Bengaluru for its modern lifestyle, vibrant food culture, green spaces and thriving startup ecosystem. Referring to it as the "Silicon Valley of India," he said his

two-week stay in the city exceeded expectations. He noted that social media often fails to capture the full picture, adding that Bengaluru offers a mix of high-end dining, greenery, unique architecture and what he described as "sci-fi looking temples."Heaton also highlighted Karnataka's broader appeal, stating that the state offers a balance of urban sophistication and cultural richness beyond the capital. Based on his journey so far, he ranked Karnataka as his top destination, placing it ahead of Tamil Nadu, while clarifying that his ranking was purely based on personal enjoyment.In his social media post, he admitted to having minimal expectations before arriving but said the experience surpassed them. He described Bengaluru as a highly liveable city filled with ambitious young people focused on building their futures, while also being welcoming and friendly.However, he acknowledged the city's traffic congestion as a notable drawback. He added that having local friends helped him better understand the city's culture and lifestyle. Celebrating Holi in Bengaluru, he said, made his visit even more memorable.

The video has sparked widespread reactions online, with many users agreeing with his positive observations about the city's energy and startup culture. Others pointed out civic challenges such as traffic and infrastructure issues. Comments ranged from appreciation for showcasing a balanced perspective to debates on Bengaluru's rapid growth and urban challenges.

Jayadeva to set up 100-bed cardiac hub in West Bengaluru

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

In a major push to decentralise specialised healthcare, Sri Jayadeva Institute of Cardiovascular Sciences and Research has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Greater Bengaluru Authority to establish a 100-bed cardiac care unit in Govindarajanagara, West Bengaluru.

The new facility, announced in the State Budget by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, will be housed within an existing multispecialty hospital building of the GBA. It is expected to significantly enhance access to advanced cardiac treatment for residents in the western parts of the city.

Medical Education Minister Dr Sharanaprakash R Patil said the initiative aims to provide timely and affordable cardiac care, with most services available at minimal or no cost. The centre will also help reduce the patient load at Jayadeva's main hospital in Jayanagar.

The state government has allocated Rs 15 crore to operationalise the project. Govindarajanagar MLA Priya Krishna said civil and electrical infrastructure upgrades will be supported by local civic bodies, while efforts are underway to establish a cath-lab through CSR funding.

Additionally, the government has proposed a new campus of Bangalore Medical College and Research Institute in West Bengaluru to further strengthen healthcare infrastructure.

WILL ABIDE BY PARTY DECISIONS, SAYS DCM DK SHIVAKUMAR

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar on Sunday struck a measured tone on political developments, stating that he has complete faith in the party leadership and will abide by any decisions taken at the appropriate time.

Speaking to reporters at his Sadashivnagar residence after returning from New Delhi, Shivakumar said he would refrain from discussing political matters publicly. "Whatever happens will happen at the right time. I will no longer speak on political issues before the media. When the time comes, everything will be known," he said.Dismissing speculation around leadership changes, he added that both he and the Chief Minister have already made their position clear. "We will follow whatever directions are given by the party high command. There is no confusion or internal issue. The party knows what needs to be done and when," he asserted.

On his upcoming birthday on May 15, Shivakumar issued a strict directive against the display of flex

banners and posters across the city. He urged party workers and supporters to avoid putting up hoardings on roads, warning that it spoils the city's aesthetics. "No one should put up flexes or banners. If they do, authorities must take action. Heavy fines should be imposed for illegal displays," he said, adding that he has instructed civic officials to enforce the rules strictly.

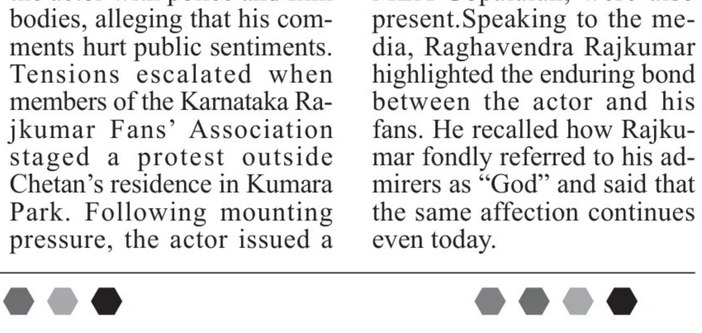
Responding to criticism from the BJP regarding internal reservation, Shivakumar defended the government's approach, stating that it has delivered justice across communities. "We have fulfilled our promise in a simple and fair manner. Issues that persisted for decades have been resolved. Our intention is to ensure justice for all sections, whether right or left communities, Lambani or Bovi," he said.He also took a swipe at opposition leaders over recent political events, questioning their motives. "Shouldn't they reflect on their own political journey and contributions?" he remarked.On the issue of pending local body elections, Shivakumar clarified that the government is prepared. "We have never said elections will not be held. We are ready to conduct corporation and local body polls," he added, reiterating the government's commitment to the democratic process.

Onion trader murdered over alleged affair; accused arrested

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

An onion trader was allegedly murdered over a suspected illicit relationship in Kadugodi, with police arresting the accused in connection with the crime.According to police, the victim, identified as Ramachandra Reddy, a native of Tamil Nadu, was killed on April 25. He had reportedly travelled frequently to Bengaluru for business, during which he developed a relationship with a woman residing in Patalamma Layout in Kadugodi. Over time, the association is said to have turned into an intimate relationship, and he would visit her whenever he was in the city.Police said the woman later became acquainted with another man, identified as Harish, and the two developed a relationship. Harish allegedly grew suspicious and enraged after noticing Ramachandra Reddy's repeated visits to the woman's residence. Unable to accept the situation, he is believed to have planned the attack.On the day of the incident, Ramachandra had reportedly come to meet the woman and was resting near a temple in the locality.

Chetan Ahimsa apologises after row over Dr Rajkumar memorial post



CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Actor Chetan Ahimsa has issued an apology following widespread outrage over his social media post questioning the allocation of land for the memorial of Dr Rajkumar.

In his post, Chetan stated that while Rajkumar is respected as a great artist, the decision to allot 2.5 acres of prime land in central Bengaluru in 2006 for a samadhi complex should be debated. He argued that land is a scarce resource in modern India and should be used for broader public benefit rather than what he termed "opportunistic" decisions.The remarks triggered strong reactions from fans and pro-Kannada organisations. Several Rajkumar fan associations filed complaints against the actor with police and film bodies, alleging that his comments hurt public sentiments. Tensions escalated when members of the Karnataka Rajkumar Fans' Association staged a protest outside Chetan's residence in Kumara Park. Following mounting pressure, the actor issued a public apology, stating that he did not intend to hurt anyone's feelings."If my words have caused pain to anyone, I sincerely apologise," Chetan said, seeking to calm the situation. After his apology, members of the fan association warned him against making further comments about the late icon.The controversy comes close to April 24, celebrated widely as Dr Rajkumar's birth anniversary. The legendary actor continues to command immense devotion across Karnataka, with thousands of fans visiting his memorial every year.On the occasion, Raghavendra Rajkumar, along with Vinay Rajkumar, offered prayers at the memorial located at Kanteerava Studio premises in Bengaluru. Local leaders, including MLA Gopalaiah, were also present.Speaking to the media, Raghavendra Rajkumar highlighted the enduring bond between the actor and his fans. He recalled how Rajkumar fondly referred to his admirers as "God" and said that the same affection continues even today.

RAILWAYS TURNS COMMUTER FRIENDLY

Bullet train coach unit inaugurated at BEML

BENGALURU

Union Minister for Railways, Electronics and IT, and Information and Broadcasting Ashwini Vaishnaw inaugurated a high-speed bullet train coach manufacturing unit at BEML in Bengaluru, marking a significant step towards indigenous railway development.

The newly established 'Aditya' unit at BEML will manufacture coaches for India's upcoming indigenous high-speed train project, known as B-28. The project is being

jointly designed by the Integral Coach Factory (ICF) and BEML, with a focus on self-reliance and advanced engineering.Equipped with cutting-edge technology, including robotic laser welding systems and high-precision machinery, the facility will handle bogie manufacturing for the high-speed coaches. The first prototype of the B-28 train is expected by early next year, with full readiness targeted by the end of 2027, the Minister said. During his visit, Vaishnaw also inspected ongoing production of railway and metro coaches and interacted with officials and workers. Senior dignitaries, including Railway Board Chairman Satish Kumar and BEML Managing Director Shantanu Roy, were present.Highlighting future connectivity plans, the Minister announced two new train services between Bengaluru and Mumbai. These include a superfast train via Hubballi-Dharwad and a Vande Bharat Sleeper service, both expected to be launched in the coming months.

He further stated that rail connectivity to coastal Karnataka will see a major boost. With the electrification of the Hassan–Mangaluru route now complete, Vande Bharat services are expected to begin soon, linking Bengaluru, Mangaluru and Madgaon.

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GUNMAN STORMS TRUMP DINNER GALA

The firing triggered panic, a sweeping security response and the evacuation of Trump, Vice President JD Vance and other top officials uninjured; suspect in custody, faces multiple charges

WASHINGTON

US Secret Service agents bundled President Donald Trump from the stage as shots rang out Saturday evening near the White House Correspondents' Association dinner venue in Washington, in what Trump later described as an attack by a "would-be assassin."

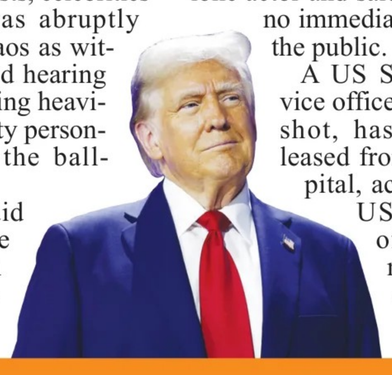
Five to eight shots were reportedly fired, triggering panic, a sweeping security response and the evacuation of Trump, Vice President JD Vance and other top officials. The high-profile annual event at the Washington Hilton, attended by senior political leaders, journalists, celebrities and guests, was abruptly thrown into chaos as witnesses described hearing gunfire and seeing heavily armed security personnel rush into the ballroom.

Attendees said the atmosphere changed within seconds as officers entered the hall shouting for people to get down. Guests in formal attire ducked under tables while glasses shattered and meals were abandoned in the scramble for cover. Security teams reportedly moved toward the dais where Trump had been seated moments earlier, while others secured exits and corridors.

The US Secret Service later said a suspect charged the checkpoint carrying multiple weapons, including a shotgun, handgun and knives. Officers intercepted the man and exchanged gunfire before taking him into custody.

It described the suspect as a lone actor and said there was no immediate threat to the public.

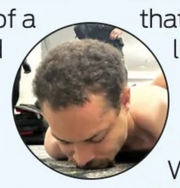
A US Secret Service officer, who was shot, has been released from the hospital, according to USSS Chief of Communications Anthony Guglielmi.



'Trump was likely target'

WASHINGTON

President Donald Trump and officials in his administration were the likely targets of a suspect who fired on a security agent guarding the White House Correspondents' Association dinner in Washington, US. Acting Attorney General Todd Todd Blanche said on Sunday. The man fired a shotgun at a Secret Service agent at a security checkpoint in the Washington Hilton hotel before being tackled and arrested. Trump and first lady Melania Trump were rushed out of the dinner. "It does appear that he, he did, in fact, have set out to target folks that work in the administration, likely including the president," Blanche told NBC News' "Meet the Press," adding that the suspect likely traveled by train from Los Angeles to Chicago and then to Washington.



California man in custody

Authorities identified the suspect as Cole Tomas Allen (31), a Los Angeles-area resident. The suspect will be charged in federal court on Monday with assault of a federal officer, discharging a firearm and attempting to kill a federal officer, Blanche said, adding he did not know if there was an Iran connection to the attack.

'Get down!' Panic and chaos at glitzy fete

- Shots fired near the White House Correspondents' Association dinner venue in Washington on Saturday night.
- President Trump, First Lady, Vice President JD Vance, several administration officials and members of Congress were swiftly evacuated.
- The suspect has been identified as Cole Tomas Allen (31) from Torrance, California.
- The suspect charged at a Secret Service checkpoint in the hotel's lobby armed with multiple weapons. He then exchanged gunfire with law enforcement and was tackled.
- A Secret Service agent struck in his bulletproof was released from the hospital on Sunday, a source said.

ASSASSINATION ATTEMPTS ON TRUMP

The US president has been involved in various security-related incidents, including assassination attempts during his presidency and election campaigns.

- **JULY 2024:** Trump was injured in a shooting at an election campaign rally in Butler County, three months before he was elected the US president for a second term.
- **SEPT 2024:** Second assassination attempt heppened when Trump was at his West Palm Springs resort in Florida with his friend and now envoy Steve Witkoff when gunshots were heard.
- **SEPT 2025:** Off-duty policeman infiltrates Trump's security team.
- **FEB 2026:** Gunman killed after crashing the security perimeter of Trump's Mar-a-Lago resort in Florida

I've studied assassinations: Trump

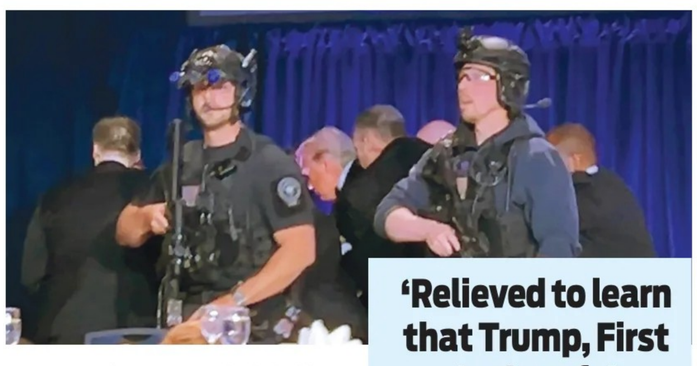
WASHINGTON

US President Donald Trump struck a philosophical tone after the gunfire incident during White Hose correspondents dinner on Saturday night.

"I ask respectfully, why do you think this keeps happening to you?" a reporter asked Trump after the chaotic incident. Trump had a ready answer, and it was about the 79-year-old's own position in the pantheon of US presidents. "Well, you know, I've studied assassinations. And I must tell you the most impactful people, the people that do the most -- you take a look at Abraham Lincoln... the people that make the biggest impact, they're the ones that they go after."

"I hate to say I'm honored by that, but I've done a lot," Trump added. "We've changed this country, and there are a lot of people that are not happy about that. So I think that's the answer."

Trump later addressed reporters at the White House, saying he was initially shocked and thought the sound was a falling tray. He praised the Secret Service and police for acting quickly, calling the response exceptional. Trump said one officer had been shot during the confrontation but survived because he was wearing a bulletproof vest. He added that the officer was in strong condition and high spirits after the incident.



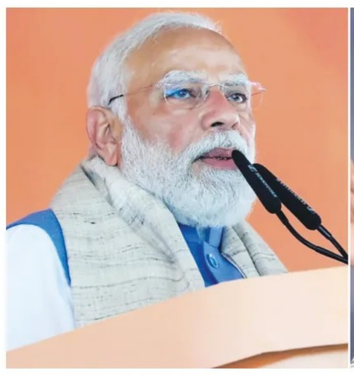
'Not going to deter me from winning Iran war'

Trump further said the shooting would not deter him from the Iran war, although he believed the incident was unlikely linked to the conflict.

'Relieved to learn that Trump, First Lady safe'

Relieved to learn that President Trump, the First Lady and Vice President are safe and unharmed following the recent security incident at a Washington DC hotel. I extend my best wishes for their continued safety and well-being. Violence has no place in a democracy and must be unequivocally condemned.

—Narendra Modi, PM



'Maha Jungle Raj' destroyed Bengal culture: Modi

KOLKATA

PM promises to "hunt down" criminals after May 4; pledges Rs 36,000 annual aid for women and new sports ecosystem

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday launched a multifaceted attack on the Trinamool Congress (TMC) government, alleging that West Bengal is no longer governed from the state secretariat, 'Nabanna', but by a "syndicate" of goons and criminals sheltered by the ruling party.

Addressing back-to-back rallies in Arambagh and Haripal just a day before the campaign for the final phase concludes, the Prime Minister asserted that the record-breaking 91.78% voter turnout in the first phase on April 23 has "ruined the sleep" of the TMC, signaling a massive public outpouring of anger after 15 years of "oppression."

The PM alleged that Bengal is under a state of lawlessness by citing the chaos surrounding Argentine football superstar Lionel Messi's visit to Kolkata's Salt Lake Stadium during the first stop of the GOAT India Tour 2025.

Labeling the event's mismanagement as a symptom of "Maha Jungle Raj," PM Modi claimed that images of fans vandalizing the stadium reached global audiences after the pitch was reportedly crowded by VIPs and politicians, blocking spectators from seeing the icon.

He noted that the subsequent resignation of West Bengal Sports Minister Aroop Biswas was a clear admission of a destroyed sports ecosystem, contrasting the Kolkata debacle with Messi's successful visits to Hyderabad, Mumbai, and Delhi, and his eventual departure from Jamnagar after visiting the Vantara animal sanctuary.

To the players of Bengal, the PM promised that a new sports culture would be built under the 'Khelo India' campaign once the BJP takes power.

Are people of Bengal terrorists? Kejriwal

New Delhi: AAP national convener Arvind Kejriwal on Sunday criticised the deployment of security forces in West Bengal ahead of the Assembly elections, calling it an "insult to the people of the state," while addressing a rally in Ballygunge in support of TMC candidate Sobhandeb Chattopadhyay, according to the speech he delivered. Kejriwal questioned the scale of security arrangements in the state, saying a large deployment of personnel was unnecessary. "The military has been called here from all over the country. What is the need for this? Are the people of Bengal terrorists? This is an insult to the people of Bengal. 3.5 lakh military personnel have been deployed in Bengal. What are they afraid of?" he said.

POWER TUSSLE

Won't speak now, will abide by any decision: DKS

BENGALURU

Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar on Sunday said that he and Chief Minister Siddaramaiah will abide by Congress high command decision on leadership issue.

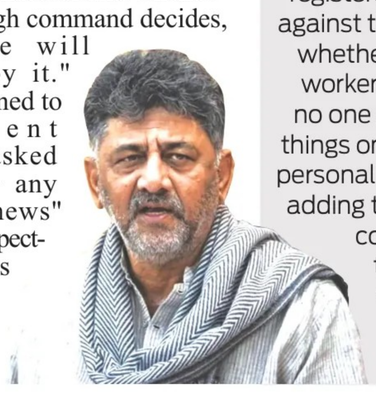
He said he has full faith in the party leadership and that appropriate decision will be taken at appropriate time.

There have been speculations about possible leadership change and cabinet reshuffle after May 4. On May 4 results for assembly elections in four states and one union territory will be out, along with by-polls to two assembly segments in Karnataka.

Speaking to reporters after returning from Delhi, Shivakumar said he will not speak on political issues before the media. I have already said that when the time comes you will get to know. So I will not tell you," Shivakumar said in response to a question on discussions with the Congress high command during his Delhi visit over the last couple of days.

He asserted that there are no issues within the party, and whatever has been already decided will take place accordingly.

Asked about the issue of leadership change as the government is about to complete three years in office, Shivakumar said, "... I have never discussed this issue. The CM and I have both said that we will accept whatever and whenever the high command decides, and we will abide by it." He declined to comment when asked whether any "good news" can be expected by his birthday on May 15.



'Don't erect flex banners on my B-Day'

Shivakumar warned his party workers against erecting flex banners for his birthday on May 15. "For May 15, I want to tell everyone that no one should put up flex banners or advertisements for my birthday. If flex is installed I will ensure that cases are registered by authorities against those responsible, whether they are party workers or followers.... no one should put such things on roads, this is my personal request," he said, adding that he has asked commissioners of the city corporations to file cases and impose heavy fines.

Women's quota: BJP to hold special assembly session in 4 states

NEW DELHI

At least four state Assemblies – Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Delhi and Odisha – where the BJP is in majority will hold special sessions on women' participation in politics this week against the backdrop of the saffron party's campaign against the Opposition over the defeat of the Constitution Amendment Bill on delimitation linked to 33% women's quota.

The TDP-ruled Andhra Pradesh also is likely to hold a special session in May. Madhya Pradesh and Haryana Assemblies have scheduled the discussion on April 27 while Delhi Assembly has called the session the next day. Odisha Assembly has scheduled the discussions on April 30.

The Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill, 2026 seeking for delimitation of LS seats and implementing 33% women's quota on its basis could not muster a two-third majority in Lok Sabha during the recent special session.

AAP moves disqualification plea against 7 MPs post-defection

NEW DELHI

Senior Aam Aadmi Party leader and MP Sanjay Singh on Sunday formally submitted a petition to Rajya Sabha Chairman C P Radhakrishnan, seeking the disqualification of seven party MPs who recently defected to the Bharatiya Janata Party. Singh addressed a press conference where he claimed that the exit of these members constitutes a clear violation of the anti-defection law.

The move comes after the AAP suffered a major political blow on Friday when MPs Raghav Chadha, Ashok Mittal, Sandeep Pathak, Harbhajan Singh, Rajendra Gupta, Vikram Sahni, and Swati Maliwal announced their resignation from the party and their subsequent merger with the BJP. The defecting members alleged that the Arvind Kejriwal-led party had strayed from its founding principles and core values.

Raghav Chadha had defended the merger by citing constitutional provisions that allow two-thirds of a party's legislative unit to merge with another organization without facing disqualification. Since the AAP holds a total of 10 seats in the Rajya Sabha, the group of seven exceeds the required two-thirds threshold. However, Singh countered this by stating that the party has consulted constitutional experts, including senior advocate Kapil Sibal and a former Lok Sabha secretary general, who believe the MPs remain liable for disqualification under the law.

The move comes after the AAP suffered a major political blow after party MPs Raghav Chadha, Ashok Mittal, Sandeep Pathak, Harbhajan Singh, Rajendra Gupta, Vikram Sahni, and Swati Maliwal merged with BJP

At the presser, Singh claimed that many Supreme Court judgments, including in cases related to Uttarakhand and Arunachal Pradesh, had clarified how such defections could lead to disqualification.

He also referred to the 10th Schedule of the Constitution, saying that "it clearly does not permit such political defections".

"While delays in such cases could lead to disappointment, the AAP would pursue the matter in court if required. These members were elected by the party but later chose to leave and join another outfit. This is a betrayal of the people of Punjab and also of the Constitution of India," Singh said.

QUICK READ

Leopard trapped after months of fear in Kundapur

Kundapur

A female leopard that had terrorized residents for six months was finally captured in Ullur-74 village near Kundapur. The animal, responsible for killing poultry and pets, was trapped in a cage placed by the forest department at Yadahaklu following repeated complaints from locals, including Ratnakar Naik. Officials later relocated the leopard safely to the forest. Despite relief over the capture, villagers criticized the forest department's response, alleging delayed action and ineffective measures. They claimed leopards are often released in nearby areas, leading to recurring attacks and continued fear, with frequent losses of cattle, dogs, and poultry in the region.

Police solve Karkala house theft, arrest 2 quickly

Karkala

Police in Karkala cracked a house theft case within 24 hours, arresting two accused and recovering stolen gold ornaments. The theft occurred between April 23 and 24 at the residence of Shankar Kulal in Pattonji Katte, where intruders broke in and stole valuables worth lakhs. Acting swiftly, a police team led by sub-divisional officer Vijay Prasad tracked down prime accused Anand Kulal and later arrested Jayaram Acharya, who allegedly bought the stolen gold. Authorities recovered 39 grams of gold valued at about Rs 5.60 lakh. Both accused were produced before court, and further investigation is ongoing.

Teen rescues boy from drowning at Someshwar beach

Mangaluru

In a brave act at Someshwar Beach, a 16-year-old boy saved his 10-year-old relative from drowning. Muhammad Arshman was swept away by a strong wave while playing near the shore. Seeing him struggle, Muhammad Ismail Faiz immediately jumped into the sea and fought the waves for nearly 10 minutes before bringing him back safely, with help from local swimmers. Exhausted from the effort, Faiz briefly lost consciousness and was taken to a hospital, where he is now recovering. Arshman was unharmed. Faiz's courage and quick thinking have been widely praised by the public.

Charmadi Ghat bus overturns; over 20 injured

Chikkamagaluru

At Charmadi Ghat in Chikkamagaluru district, a private bus lost control and overturned, injuring more than 20 passengers. According to reports, the driver reportedly lost control while negotiating the steep ghat road, causing the vehicle to topple and trigger panic among passengers. Locals and emergency responders rushed to the spot and helped rescue the injured, who were shifted to nearby hospitals for treatment. Traffic on the ghat stretch was briefly disrupted following the accident. Authorities have launched an investigation to determine the exact cause of the crash, including possible overspeeding or mechanical failure. The incident adds to a series of recent accidents reported along the ghat route.

Nuclear plant proposal denied by MP Raghavendra locally

MP B.Y. Raghavendra dismisses nuclear plant rumours, assuring residents that no such proposal is under consideration.

SHIVAMOGGA

Member of Parliament B.Y. Raghavendra has urged residents not to panic over reports regarding the setting up of a nuclear power plant in the district, clarifying that no such proposal exists for Shivamogga.

In a communication to the media on April 26, the MP stated that the National Thermal Power Corporation had identified multiple districts including Vijayapura, Koppal, Shivamogga, Uttara Kannada, and Raichur for preliminary studies related to nuclear

power projects. However, he emphasized that Shivamogga is not under any active consideration.

He added that after the matter came to his attention, he discussed it with the Deputy Commissioner of Shivamogga, who clarified that there is no proposal to establish any nuclear plant in the district.

The MP further stated that he remains committed to protecting environmental interests and public concerns in the region. He also mentioned that he would oppose any project that could cause ecological damage.

Additionally, he highlighted unresolved issues related to people displaced by the Sharavathi project, stating that adequate compensation has not yet been provided. He also noted that environmentalists in the district have been opposing the Sharavathi Pumped Storage project due to ecological concerns.

B. Y. Raghavendra said he would take up the matter with the concerned Union Minister to ensure that no harmful nuclear project is implemented in the district.

Meanwhile, Shivamogga Deputy Commissioner Prabhulinga Kavalikatti clarified that in his report to NTPC, he had stated that there is no suitable land available for such a project in the district, effectively ruling out immediate feasibility.

Diploma civil engineers celebrate victory with gratitude ceremony

Diploma civil engineers agitation ends successfully in Mangaluru; a gratitude ceremony on April 27 will honour supporters and mark their achieved demands resolution.

MANGALURU

The long-standing agitation by diploma civil engineers has ended successfully, marking a significant achievement for the community. Following the resolution of their demands, a gratitude and felicitation ceremony has been scheduled to be held on April 27 in Mangaluru.

The engineers had been pressing for various service-related and employment concerns, seeking fair recognition and opportunities in the civil engineering sector. After sustained efforts and representation to the authorities, their demands have reportedly been accepted, leading to the conclusion of their protest movement.

Representatives of the association expressed satisfaction over the outcome, stating that the struggle was aimed at ensuring justice and rightful opportunities for diploma holders in government and private sectors. They credited unity among members and continuous dialogue with authorities for the success of the movement.

The upcoming ceremony will be held to acknowledge the support received during the agitation and to formally express gratitude to all those who stood by the cause. Members from various parts of the district are expected to participate in the event.

Organizers said the programme will also highlight the journey of the agitation, key milestones, and the eventual resolution of demands. Leaders of the association will address the gathering and thank supporters, well-wishers, and officials who contributed to the positive outcome.

The event is expected to strengthen solidarity among diploma civil engineers and encourage continued cooperation for future professional issues.

Lokayukta probes illegal sand mining in Brahmavar

BRAHMAVAR

The Karnataka Lokayukta police have initiated an inquiry into alleged illegal and unscientific sand mining in Nagaramata area of Hosala village near Barkur in Brahmavar taluk, following sustained protests by villagers, farmers, and activists.

A team led by Mangaluru division SP Dinesh Kumar BP conducted a two-day inspection along the Seetha river stretch on Wednesday and Thursday. The visit was prompted by complaints that mining activities were being carried out in violation of permitted norms, causing environmental damage and hardship to local residents.

During the field visit, officials gathered testimonies from affected villagers who alleged that although permission was granted to extract sand only up to a depth of one metre, mining was being carried out at depths of three to four metres. This excessive extraction has reportedly led to groundwater contamination, with several nearby wells turning saline.

The investigation also focused on irregularities in transportation. Locals claimed that tipper trucks were carrying up to six tonnes of sand while officially recording only three tonnes in transport documents. Women protesters personally presented their grievances to the officials during the inspection.

As part of the probe, activists were summoned to the Lokayukta office in Udupi for document verification. The contractor, Kusha Kumar, who was allegedly operating under police protection despite protests, was also called for questioning.

Following the intervention, residents reported that sand mining activities, which had continued for nearly two weeks, were halted abruptly on Saturday. The movement of hundreds of trucks transporting sand has since stopped, bringing temporary relief to the aggrieved community.

May 2 recount of postal votes in Sringeri constituency may impact results, worrying sitting MLA T. D. Rajegowda.

Postal ballots recount ordered in Sringeri constituency

CHIKKAMAGALURU

Following directions from the Karnataka High Court, the recounting of postal ballots in the Sringeri Vidhan souda constituency has been scheduled for May 2. The counting will take place at a college in Chikkamagaluru, and a fresh result will be announced afterward. This development has created concern for sitting Congress MLA T. D. Rajegowda.

In the 2023 Vidhan souda elections, a total of 1,811 postal ballots were cast, of which 279 were rejected. The High Court, in its April 6 order, directed that the rejected ballots be re-examined and that all postal votes be recounted before declaring a

revised result. The court had also granted two weeks for filing objections, which ended on April 20.

Authorities have now initiated preparations for the recount process. Counting will begin at 9:00 AM on May 2 under strict CCTV surveillance. Four Assistant Returning Officers (AROs) have been appointed, along with three officials to oversee and supervise the process.

Notably, T. D. Rajegowda had originally won the seat by a narrow margin of 201 votes. Defeated BJP candidate Jeevaraj had challenged the counting process in court, leading to this recount order.

Notices have been issued to all 12 candidates who contested the 2023 election in the constituency. Gaurav Kumar Shetty, Deputy Secretary (Development) of the Zilla Panchayat, has been appointed as the returning officer for the recount.

After nearly three years of legal proceedings, this recount is politically significant, with keen interest on whether the final outcome will change.

Stan Nite 20th edition enchants audience in Mangaluru

MANGALURU

The 20th edition of Stan Nite held at the Valencia church grounds in Mangaluru turned into a vibrant musical celebration, captivating a packed audience with soulful melodies and energetic stage performances.

Organized by Alfred Bennis Creations in collaboration with the Catholic Sabha Valencia Unit and the Community Empowerment Trust, the event showcased strong coordination, professional stage management, and rich cultural expression.

At the centre of the programme was Stanislaus Mendonca, popularly known as 'Sangeeth Saurabh'. A singer, lyricist, and composer, he has already conducted 19 successful musical nights, and the 20th edition marked another milestone in his creative journey. Despite being based in the UK, his continued dedication to Konkani music remains a driving force behind his work.

The evening featured performances by singers including Ashwin D'Costa, Jason Lobo, Ethan Tauro, Varna D'Souza, Velita Lobo, and Disha Moras, who performed popular compositions by Stanislaus Mendonca. Their performances were supported by live music arrangements from experienced directors Pappan and Joswin.

Adding further energy to the night, the Urban Groove dance team delivered dynamic choreography, while the comedy group 'Memory Ani Sangathi' entertained the audience with humour-filled acts. The event was smoothly anchored by emcees Lawrence Barboza and Joseph Sequeira from the UK.

With media support from Daijiworld, the programme concluded on a high note, strengthening the cultural connection between artists and the Konkani-speaking community.

Sridhar International School achieves 100% CBSE success

BHADRAPURA

Sridhar International School, Bhadrapura–Shiralakoppa, has once again demonstrated its academic excellence by securing a remarkable 100% result in the CBSE Class 10 examinations for the academic year 2025–26. The institution's President, Ms. M.S. Roopa Srinath, and Secretary, Dr. Srinath, shared this achievement with the press, highlighting the school's consistent commitment to quality education.

All 35 students who appeared for the examination passed with commendable performance, reflecting the institution's focus on both academic rigor and holistic development. Leading the

to the school. In total, 7 students scored above 90%, showcasing high academic standards.

Among the results, 11 students achieved distinction, 23 secured first class, and 1 student passed in second class. Subject-wise performance was equally impressive. In Kannada, 3 students scored a perfect 100 marks, while 24 students achieved above 90%. Additionally, high scores were recorded in Science (7 students), English (9 students), Social Science (8 students), and Information Technology (6 students), each surpassing the 90% mark.

Established with the vision of delivering value-based and modern education, Sridhar International School has built a distinct reputation through experienced faculty, student-centered teaching methods, discipline, and innovation. The school also emphasizes co-curricular activities, leadership opportunities, and a supportive learning environment to ensure overall student development. The management credited this success to the collective efforts of students, teachers, and parents working together.

Religious freedom at CET exam centres must be respected

MANGALURU

Allegations that examination staff asked students to remove a sacred religious thread during a recent CET exam have sparked criticism from former mayor K. Ashraf, who called the reported incident a violation of constitutional rights.

In a press statement, Ashraf stated that the "janivara," regarded as a sacred symbol among Vedic students, should not be interfered with under any circumstances during examinations. He emphasized that students have the dual right to appear for exams and freely practice their religion, even within exam centres.

"Every student is entitled to maintain their religious identity. Denying this amounts to infringing on their fundamental rights," he said, underscoring that the right to religious freedom is guaranteed under the Constitution of India and applies equally in educational settings.

Ashraf described the alleged actions of the staff as "condemnable" and reflective of insensitivity toward cultural and religious practices. He urged examination authorities to review their procedures and ensure that invigilators and staff are properly sensitized to respect diversity among candidates.

COASTAL THUNDER WARNING

IMD issues Yellow Alert for coastal Karnataka

UDUPI

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued a Yellow Alert for Dakshina Kannada and Udupi districts from April 26 to 29, forecasting moderate rainfall accompanied by thunderstorms and lightning across coastal Karnataka.

Despite the rain prediction, hot and humid conditions are expected to continue in the region, with daytime temperatures remaining high. The IMD has also warned of possible heatwave-like conditions in certain pockets, urging residents to take necessary precautions.

Fishermen and coastal communities have been advised to remain cautious, especially during thunderstorms and lightning activity. Authorities have emphasized safety measures for those working near the sea and open areas.

The region witnessed scattered weather activity in the past few days. On April 24 night, several areas experienced moderate rainfall, while Friday and Saturday remained mostly cloudy with occasional sunshine. However, the oppressive heat continued to affect daily life.

Rainfall was also reported in parts of Byndoor late Friday night, indicating changing weather patterns along the coast. In Dakshina Kannada, Saturday saw a mix of sun and cloud cover with high humidity levels.

In Mangaluru, the maximum temperature was recorded at 34.7°C, slightly above the seasonal average, while the minimum temperature stood at 25.3°C. Meteorological officials noted a marginal rise in both day and night temperatures compared to normal conditions.

The IMD has advised residents to stay hydrated, avoid prolonged exposure to the sun, and remain alert for sudden weather changes. The combination of heat and sudden thundershowers may create uncomfortable conditions over the next few days.

QUICK READ

Kaup MLA launches ninth FMD vaccination campaign

Kaup

Kaup MLA Gurme Suresh Shetty formally launched the ninth phase of the Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD) vaccination campaign at the Bhagirthi Gograha cow shelter. The event was organised under the National Livestock Disease Control Programme at the shelter located in his Swagruha premises. The MLA administered the vaccines as part of the nationwide initiative aimed at protecting livestock. Tipper accident claims driver life in quarry.

Fire damages mill shop in Sedam village

SEDAM

A fire broke out in a mill shop at Neelahalli village in Sedam taluk after a suspected short circuit, causing heavy loss to the owner. The shop belongs to Udayakumar Doddamani. According to reports, materials including electrical boards, corn sacks, containers, wooden tables, and clothes worth around □60,000 were destroyed in the fire. Soon after the incident, family members and villagers rushed to the spot and tried to control the flames. Their quick response helped prevent the fire from spreading to nearby shops and houses. Officials and local representatives visited the site and inspected the damage. Villagers have urged the authorities to provide compensation to the affected family.

Committee intensifies decades-long struggle for Anavatti taluk

SORABA

The twenty-year movement to establish Anavatti as an independent taluk has reached a critical turning point. During a preliminary meeting held on Saturday, local leaders and activists declared that the town possesses all necessary qualifications for administrative elevation. With the state government currently proposing several new taluks, proponents argue that Anavatti's infrastructure, including vast land for government offices, state highway connectivity, and established educational institutions, makes it an ideal candidate for immediate conversion.Karthik Sahukar, who presided over the meeting, announced that a massive public gathering will be convened soon to escalate their demands. Former Zilla Panchayat member Girish P.S. Kubaturu echoed this sentiment, urging residents to support the cause regardless of political party affiliations. He noted that Anavatti's potential has already garnered significant attention at the state level, making the dream of a new taluk achievable if political will is exerted.

Minister Santosh S. Lad announces wage revision review plan

Minister said new laws for workers, ₹60,000 crore welfare schemes, and job fairs will boost Karnataka employment

SANDUR

The Karnataka government is actively considering a revised minimum wage structure for workers, said Labour Minister Santosh S. Lad during a public programme held in Sandur taluk of Ballari district.

Speaking at the "Sandur Sankalp Samarpana Samavesha-2" event at a government school in Talur village, the minister said the proposed wage revision is being planned in line with Supreme Court guidelines. He added that the aim is to ensure workers can meet basic needs such as food, clothing, and housing.He said the government is focused on improving the lives of unorganised sector workers and bringing them into the mainstream through welfare schemes. He also highlighted that Karnataka has introduced a law to protect gig workers, offering social security benefits to drivers and cleaners through smart cards.According to him, new laws are also being prepared for film industry workers and domestic workers to ensure better protection and benefits.The minister noted that the state's five guarantee schemes cost nearly ₹60,000 crore annually but are helping improve living standards across Karnataka.

He also mentioned that job fairs will be conducted to create employment opportunities for local youth whenever required.

Local MLA E. Annapurna said special focus has been given to education in the region, with many schools upgraded into model institutions. She added that new courses like mining diploma and nursing will soon be introduced.

MP E. Tukaram said major funds have been allocated for water, road, and irrigation projects, and healthcare outreach programmes are expanding in rural areas.

The event also included distribution of smart cards to workers and inauguration of several development works, with officials and public representatives attending in large numbers.

59-Year-Old Fugitive Arrested After Two Years on the Run

MANGALURU

Police have nabbed a long-absconding accused wanted in a 1998 case after he failed to appear in court for nearly two years

Mangaluru police have successfully traced and arrested Muneer Ahmed alias Ahmed, aged 59, son of late Aziz. The accused had been evading arrest and court proceedings for approximately two years in connection with Mangaluru North Police Station Crime No. 291/1998 registered under IPC sections 143, 147, 436 and 149.

The case is currently pending before the Additional District and Sessions Court as SC No. 68/2024. A warrant had been issued against him due to his repeated non-appearance. On April 25, 2026, a team led by Police Inspector Sachin Kumar of Mangalore North station, under the guidance of Assistant Police Commissioner Ravish Nayak of the Central Sub-Division, traced the accused to his rented accommodation at Room No. 404, 4th floor, Sai Arts Apartment in Kulashkara, Mangaluru.The police team, which included PSI Faizunnisa, HC 929 Madan Mahesh, SI 2251 Geetha, HC 517 Shankarappa, HC 901, PC 2353, PC 311 and PC 2666, took him into custody from the location. He was later produced before the court, which ordered his judicial remand. The accused was previously residing at Ansari Cross Road, Bunder, Mangaluru.

Basavanna teachings inspire call for social unity: Eshwar Khandre

SEDAM

The teachings of 12th-century social reformer Basavanna were highlighted as a guiding force for humanity during the Basava Jayanti celebrations held at Matruchaya College campus in Sedam. The event also featured a large-scale Ishtalinga worship programme attended by religious leaders, politicians and devotees.

Forest Minister and All India Veerashaiva Lingayat Mahasabha national president Eshwar Khandre said Basavanna's philosophy remains an example for the entire world. He stated that peace and harmony can be achieved only when his principles are followed in daily life. He also stressed the importance of Vachana literature in shaping discipline and moral values among youth.

Medical Education and Skill Development Minister Dr. Sharanaprakash Patil said Basavanna introduced the concept of early democratic values and that his teachings continue to guide society even today.

Former MP Basavaraj Patil Sedam said that society must be strengthened through discipline, unity and cultural awareness. He added that values like Kayaka and Dasoha promote social upliftment and should be passed on to future generations.

Religious leaders including various Shivacharyas from different mathas participated in the Ishtalinga puja and blessings ceremony. They emphasized that Basavanna's message of equality allows worship without discrimination of caste or gender.

The event also saw participation from several community leaders, trustees, and women's organization representatives who highlighted the importance of preserving cultural traditions.

Organizers said the celebration aimed to spread awareness of Basavanna's ideals, especially among the younger generation, and to encourage a society based on equality, service, and moral strength.

MARATHA COMMUNITY PLANS AMBEDKAR JAYANTI EVENT

BIDAR

The Maratha community in Bidar has announced a special programme to celebrate the birth anniversary of Dr B R Ambedkar on April 29 at Ambedkar Circle in the city.

Speaking at a press conference at Patrika Bhawan, organiser Dada Maharaj Nagarkar said the event will begin at 5 pm and aims to promote unity among different communities. He said the celebration is being organised to reduce differences and encourage brotherhood in society.

Nagarkar said that the ideas of great leaders like Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and Dr Ambedkar should inspire people to live with equality and respect. He added that the main goal of the programme is to spread the message of harmony and coexistence.

He also said that this initiative will not be limited to a single year and will continue in the coming years as a regular social event.According to organisers, saints from various communities will attend the programme. Labour Minister Santosh Lad is also expected to participate in the event.Community leaders said Dr Ambedkar belongs to everyone, as his Constitution guarantees equal rights to all citizens. They stressed that his teachings should be followed to build a fair and equal society.They also pointed out that caste-based discrimination still exists in rural areas and said there is a need to take Ambedkar's message to the grassroots level.

Several community leaders, including Nagaraj Mundaragi and others, were present during the announcement and supported the initiative.

Tragic crash claims two bank employees lives

DODDABALLAPUR

Two private bank employees lost their lives after their motorcycle collided with a tractor near Court Road on Saturday night around 11 pm. The victims have been identified as Nagesh N, 26, from Namgondlu village in Gauribidanur taluk, and Manoj, 24, from Haralukuppe village in Mandya district. Both worked in a private bank and shared a rented room in the city. They were returning after dinner when a loaded tractor taking a U-turn suddenly hit their bike.

One died on the spot while the other succumbed to injuries in hospital despite treatment. Police have registered a case at Doddaballapur Nagar Police Station and are investigating the incident. Family members and locals blamed poor street lighting and lack of safety measures at the accident spot. Authorities said they will review road safety conditions in the area to prevent such tragic accidents in future. Locals also demanded better lighting and strict enforcement of traffic rules on the busy stretch immediately implemented

Literary event highlights value of books and ideas

VIJAYAPURA

The book fair organised by the May Literary Club in Vijayapura has successfully concluded with a total business turnover of nearly five lakh rupees. Organisers said the event proved that people's interest in books is still strong despite the growing influence of social media.Speaking at a press conference, May Literary Club member Anil Hosamani said the fair was organised as an effort to encourage young people to reconnect with literature and the ideas of Buddha, Basava, and Babasaheb Ambedkar. He said the aim was to promote values of equality and social awareness through books.He added that more than 35 publishing houses participated in the event after responding to the invitation from the organisers. Many publishers initially believed that book sales in Vijayapura would be low, but their opinion changed after witnessing the public response at the fair.

MLC denies delay in ST certificates issue

KALABURAGI

Amid allegations of delay in issuing Scheduled Tribes certificates to the Talawar community, Congress MLC Thippannappa Kamaknoor has clarified that there is no disruption in the process and that certificates continue to be issued in Kalaburagi district.

His statement came a day after JD(S) State secretary Shivakumar Natikar alleged that ST certificates were not being issued to members of the Talawar community in Kalaburagi and Yadgir districts, raising concerns among community members.

Addressing a press conference in Kalaburagi, Kamaknoor rejected the claims as false and misleading. He said that eligible applicants are continuing to receive certificates and there has been no official stoppage in the system.

He urged community leaders not to spread unverified information, stating that such claims could damage both public trust and the image of the government.

According to him, nearly 15,000 certificates have been issued in the district between 2024 and 2026, showing that the process is functioning normally.

He also dismissed allegations that the issue is linked to political interference by Minister Priyank Kharge. Instead, he said the minister has taken steps to hold meetings with the Chief Minister and community representatives to address concerns.

Kamaknoor admitted that there have been minor delays in recent days but said he has personally intervened by coordinating with the Deputy Commissioner to resolve individual cases.

He further said he has brought the matter to the attention of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, who assured that issues will be addressed once officials complete election-related duties.

The clarification comes amid growing political debate over welfare certificate distribution in the region.

POLICY REFORM DISCUSSION

Kalaburagi panel plans symposium on regional growth

KALABURAGI

The Kalyan Karnataka Horata Samiti has announced plans to hold a major symposium aimed at discussing the overall development of the Kalyan Karnataka region. The decision was taken during a core committee meeting held at Sharanabasaveshwara Dasoha Maha Mane Hall in Kalaburagi.The meeting reviewed the Govinda Rao Committee report, which highlights developmental gaps and regional imbalance in several sectors including human development. Members analyzed both the strengths and concerns raised in the report.Under the leadership of honorary president Basavaraj Deshmukh and founder president Dr. Lakshman Dasti, the committee decided to organize a detailed symposium in collaboration with educational institutions and other organizations. The aim is to prepare a time-bound action plan for regional progress.Dr. Dasti expressed concern that provisions under Article 371(J), which are meant to support the region, are not being properly implemented. He said this has created difficulties in recruitment and promotions for candidates in the region.The issue has also been brought to the attention of district in-charge minister Priyank Kharge. Leaders stressed that elected representatives, including ministers, MPs, and MLAs, must take the matter seriously and work towards effective implementation of development policies.Experts including Prof. R.K. Hudagi, Dr. Sangeeta Katti, Prof. Sanaullah, and M.B. Ningappa suggested that a structured and time-bound development plan is necessary for meaningful progress.

During the meeting, achievers such as Dr. Sangeeta Kattimani and Prof. R.K. Hudagi were also honored for their contributions.

Bidar peace walk promotes harmony amid global tensions

BIDAR

In response to rising global tensions, including the ongoing Iran–US conflict in the Middle East, a peace walk was organized in Bidar to spread a message of harmony and non-violence.The event was jointly conducted by multiple Rotary clubs of the district. The walk began at Barid Shahi Park and passed through key city points such as the new bus stand and Madiwala Machideva Circle before concluding at Rotary Kannadamb Circle.

Rotary Kalyan Zone District Governor M.K. Ravindra said that maintaining world peace is a shared responsibility and warned that war only brings danger to humanity. Keshav Reddy, another speaker at the event, said wars lead only to destruction and that peace can prevail only when human values are strengthened. Senior journalist

Shivasharanappa Vali said wars deeply affect societies, especially smaller nations, which suffer the most during global conflicts.

QUICK READ

Udupi police trace missing woman near Nepal border

Udupi

Udupi Police's dedicated Women Missing Task Force has successfully traced a woman who was reported missing in a case registered at Manipal Police Station (Crime No. 82/2024). The operation was carried out by a team comprising PSI Harish of the Women's Police Station, PSI Shivakumar of Udupi City Police Station, and PSI Kartik of Hiriyadka Police Station. The woman was located in a village situated along the Uttar Pradesh-Nepal border. Senior police officials have been informed of the development.

HDMC leader inspects rain damage in Dharwad

DHARWAD

Heavy rains and strong winds over the past two days caused several trees to fall across parts of Dharwad, damaging houses and electric poles in some areas.

Hubballi-Dharwad Municipal Corporation (HDMC) leader Iresha Anchatageri visited the affected locations and inspected the damage.

He reviewed areas including Kamalapur, Koti Lane, and Harijan Keri, where fallen trees had blocked roads and affected normal movement.

Officials and local representatives discussed immediate steps to clear the debris and restore basic services.

Teams have been instructed to remove fallen trees quickly to avoid further inconvenience to residents. Several local leaders and citizens were present during the inspection and assisted in assessing the situation.

Parameshwara warns insurers over farmer compensation

Kunigal saw low farmer insurance enrolment; MLA Ranganath urged awareness, simpler procedures, and state action to restore trust.

TUMAKURU

District in-charge Minister G. Parameshwara has warned insurance companies against unfair practices, stating that farmers may be advised to avoid insurance if proper compensation is not provided.

Speaking at the quarterly KDP meeting held at the Zilla Panchayat, he said it is unjust for companies to impose strict conditions and offer low payouts to farmers. He directed officials to hold discussions with insurance firms, seek relaxation in rules and submit a report to the government for further action.]The issue gained attention after data revealed that only 1,453 farmers in Kunigal taluk had opted for insurance, the lowest in the district. MLA H. D. Ranganath said farmers are losing trust in the system and called for better awareness and simplified procedures. Several MLAs demanded state intervention, pointing out that large premiums are collected while compensation remains low.The minister also instructed the Horticulture Department to assess mango crop losses and submit a detailed report. Concerns were raised over the death of 4,584 cattle in the district, and officials were told to ensure timely compensation to affected farmers. Reports of peacock deaths suspected to be linked to bird flu are under investigation, with lab results expected soon.Drinking water scarcity was another major

concern discussed in the meeting. Officials reported that 139 villages are facing water shortages, with 34 villages currently receiving water through tractors and private borewells. Out of 122 approved borewells, 65 have been drilled, while several have failed due to groundwater depletion. The minister warned that the situation could worsen and stressed the need for alternative solutions. The meeting also reviewed progress in health and other departments. Senior officials and leaders were present during the discussion.Later, the minister flagged off the Krishi Abhiyan Information Rath aimed at spreading awareness about scientific farming methods. The campaign will guide farmers on crop management, fertilizers, organic practices and modern techniques ahead of the kharif season.

Grand preparations underway for BSY mega celebration

CHITRADURGA

A massive celebration is being planned in Chitradurga to mark the Abhimanotsava of former Chief Minister B. S. Yediyurappa with leaders calling it a historic event expected to draw huge crowds from across the state.

Former Deputy Chief Minister and MP Govinda Karajola said the programme on May 9 will be organised on an unprecedented scale.

He added that Union Home Minister Amit Shah will inaugurate the event and more than ten lakh people are expected to attend from different regions of Karnataka.Speaking after the Bhoomi Puja at the event venue, Karajola said preparations are in full swing with party workers actively participating out of admiration for Yediyurappa.

He noted that MPs, MLAs, former ministers, party leaders, farmers and women will take part in the grand celebration. He urged the public to cooperate in making the programme successful.

Meanwhile, BJP state president B. Y. Vijayendra described Yediyurappa as a strong leader who has spent over 50 years working for farmers, the poor and marginalized communities.

BJP leader Vijayendra praised Yediyurappa's 50-year service, saying Abhimanotsava will celebrate his legacy with Bhoomi Puja and large statewide participation

He said the Abhimanotsava is being organised to celebrate this long political journey and contribution to society.

Vijayendra said Bhoomi Puja for the event was conducted under the guidance of religious leaders at an auspicious time.

He added that lakhs of people are expected to gather from every corner of the state, making it one of the largest political celebrations in recent times.

He also mentioned that the programme will be held in the presence of prominent religious figures and senior leaders, adding significance to the occasion.

Leaders believe the event will reflect the strong public support and respect Yediyurappa continues to enjoy across Karnataka.

Organisers said extensive arrangements are being made to manage the large crowd and ensure smooth conduct of the event. Volunteers and party workers have already begun groundwork at the venue.

The leaders concluded by inviting people from all sections of society to attend the celebration and be part of what they described as a landmark event in the state's political history marking Yediyurappa's enduring legacy.

Ambedkar ideals key to equality says Swamiji

MAGADI

Dr Siddharaju Swamiji of Palanahalli Math has said that the power of the Constitution created by Dr B R Ambedkar must be protected and followed in daily life. He was speaking after inaugurating the joint birth anniversary celebrations of Dr Ambedkar and Dr Babu Jagjivan Ram in Kempayyanapalya village of Magadi taluk on Sunday, organised by the Karnataka Jai Bhim Movement and local villagers.

The Swamiji said that the Constitution, described as a treasure of knowledge by Ambedkar, should be properly implemented so that all communities, especially the underprivileged, receive equal rights in education, employment, and other opportunities. He also stressed the need to protect land, water, and the environment, and urged the youth to stay away from harmful activities.He noted that untouchability still exists in society and called for collective efforts to remove it and build an equal society. He said that everyone must respect and follow the Constitution to achieve true social justice.Karnataka Jai Bhim Movement founder and state president S Shivashankar also addressed the gathering.

Heatwave and global tensions hit mango farmers

SRINIVASPUR

A severe heatwave and rising global tensions have created uncertainty over this year's mango harvest in Srinivaspur, one of Karnataka's major mango-growing regions. Farmers and traders fear heavy losses as production may drop to nearly 30 percent.

Spread across about 65,000 acres, mango farming supports thousands of livelihoods in the region. However, high temperatures and dry weather have damaged flowering and caused early fruit drop, affecting the crop badly.

Farmer B.A. Syed Farooq said the season began with hope, but heat conditions led to major losses. Rising costs of labour, irrigation and pesticides have added to farmers' stress. He urged the government to provide immediate support.

The harvest season, which usually starts in May and lasts several months, is now expected to shrink to barely two months. Lower arrivals may reduce market activity, affecting transport, packaging and jobs.

Traders also worry about competition from neighboring states like Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, which could influence prices.

The pulp industry is also under pressure due to reduced fruit supply. Supplier K. Ayaz Ahmed warned that global issues may worsen the situation. Tensions involving West Asia could increase shipping costs and affect exports.

Mandi owner T. Mohammed Irshad said the crisis impacts the entire local economy, including workers and businesses.

Kumaraswamy questioned transparency on minister's health, alleging political misuse of situation and indirect attack on Shivakumar

HDK raises questions over Minister Sudhakar's health

CHITRADURGA

Concerns over the health of Karnataka Minister D. Sudhakar have sparked political remarks after Union Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy said the situation was being "misused" by some leaders.

Speaking at a private event in Chitradurga, Kumaraswamy said Sudhakar's condition is serious and he is fighting for his life. He added that he did not want to discuss political matters at this stage, but raised concerns about what is happening inside the hospital.

He questioned whether certain details about the minister's health were being hidden and suggested that pressure from influential people could be involved. He also said it was painful to see the condition of the minister and urged transparency regarding his treatment.

Without naming anyone directly, Kumaraswamy alleged that some leaders are "experts in using such situations" for political benefit. His remarks are seen as an indirect attack on Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar.He further said he would not discuss JDS political positions or local constituency issues at this time, focusing instead on the humanitarian aspect of the situation.

Kumaraswamy also reacted to a recent Congress event in Hubballi, claiming that political conferences are being held to protect party interests. He alleged that the party is spending money to strengthen its position and making claims about community support.

The statements have added a new political layer to an already sensitive situation surrounding Minister Sudhakar's health. While medical updates remain limited, the issue has now turned into a topic of political debate in the state.

Wild elephant attacks raise alarm across Karnataka

RAMANAGARA

A series of wild elephant incidents has once again raised concern in Karnataka, as human-animal conflict continues in several regions.

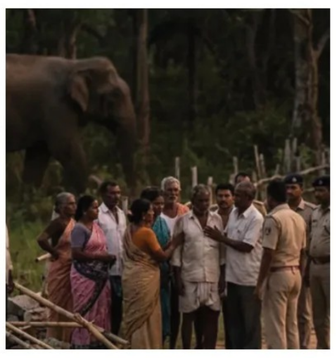
In a tragic incident at Chilandwadi village in Kanakapura taluk of Bengaluru South district, a 55-year-old man named Karigunda died after being attacked by a wild elephant while walking on the road.

The attack took place in the Sangama forest zone area, just before the monsoon season, leaving local residents shocked.

Forest officials visited the spot and carried out an inspection after shifting the body to the Kanakapura taluk hospital.

Earlier, panic spread in the Sangama tourist area after a wild elephant suddenly appeared, forcing visitors to run in different directions for safety. The video of the incident has since gone viral.

Meanwhile, in Chamarajanagar district, a lone wild elephant entered Nagapattana



village near Baragi Colony in Gundlupet taluk and destroyed a maize crop belonging to farmer Mahesh. The area is close to the Bandipur Tiger Reserve, where such incidents have been increasing.

In another case in PG Palya of Hanur taluk, a herd of more than ten elephants, including calves, was seen resting in a lake for several hours. Officials said the animals are coming closer to human areas in search of water due to rising temperatures of 36–37°C in the district.

Forest department officials are monitoring the situation as residents demand stronger measures to prevent further damage and loss of life.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, ARUN S/o RAMESH T C, R/o Flat No 212, Blue Lotus Park Apartment, Varanasi Main Road, K R Puram, Bangalore Urban, Bangalore, Karnataka-560036, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as ARUN RAMESH.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, LAMBOLE KANIKA VIJAY D/o VIJAY, R/o No N78, Anuprakash, 6th Main Road, Sanchar Nagar, Thanisandra, Bengaluru, Karnataka-560077, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as KANIKA LAMBOLE.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, ISHU BHATIA S/o DEEPAK BHATIA, R/o Flat Indigo 301, HM World City Apartment, Gottigere Kengeri Road, Near Vinayaka Theater, J.P Nagar, 9th Phase, Raghavana Palya, Anjanapura, Bengaluru, Karnataka-560108, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as ARVIND BHATIA.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, BHASKARA MATTUR S/o KRISHNAMURTHY MATTUR, aged about 59 years, residing at # 86, 7th Cross, Paramount Gardens, Thalaghattapura, Kanakapura Main Road, Opp. Thalaghattapura, Bengaluru, Karnataka-560109, have changed my name from MATTUR KRISHNAMURTHY BHASKARA alias BHASKARA M K alias M K BHASKARA to BHASKARA MATTUR for all practical /documentation purposes, vide affidavit dated 25-04-2026 sworn before Advocate & Notary Ravikumar. V., Bengaluru, Karnataka.

NAME CHANGE

I, **MOHAMED JUNAIDH** , S/o, Abdul Subhan, Resident of No 1238,L N Colony 3rd Cross Yeshwanth Pura Bengaluru Dist,560022, have changed my name to **MOHAMMED JUNAIDH** , vide affidavit dated: 26.04.2026 before notary B.A. LAKSHMINARAYANA RAO, Bengaluru.

NAME CHANGE

I, **ABDUL RAHIM KHADER** , S/o, Abdul Khader, Resident of No 2555,Ashoka Road Lashkar Mohalla Mysuru Dist, 570001, have changed my name to **ABDUL RAHEEM** , vide affidavit dated: 26.04.2026 before notary B.A. LAKSHMINARAYANA RAO, Bengaluru.

NAME CHANGE

I, **MOHAMMED OMAR** , S/o, Abdul Kareem, Resident of No 110,3rd Cross Telecom Layout KP Agrahara Bengaluru Dist,560023, have changed my name to **MOHAMMED OMAR ABDUL KAREEM** , vide affidavit dated: 26.04.2026 before notary B.A. LAKSHMINARAYANA RAO, Bengaluru.

NAME CHANGE

I, **SHAHISTA** , W/o, Nisar Ahamed, Resident of No 01,Jally Machine Water Tank Road Aditya Nagar CB Halli Vidyaranapura Bengaluru Dist, 560097, have changed my name to **SHAHEESTA** , vide affidavit dated: 26.04.2026 before notary B.A. LAKSHMINARAYANA RAO, Bengaluru.

RURAL AGITATION INTENSIFIES

Farmers' protest over illegal mining enters day 12

KALABURAGI

The farmers' protest against illegal mining in Shadipura village of Chincholi taluk has entered its 12th day on Sunday, with protesters expressing strong anger over alleged inaction by officials.Despite continuing their protest in extreme heat, farmers said no effective steps have been taken by the authorities to stop illegal mining activities in the area. They accused the administration of negligence and

delay in action.Farmer leader Shankar Pawar said that it was an insult to the farming community that the Assistant Commissioner, who visited the protest site, did not properly consider their demands. He said this attitude has increased anger among the villagers.Farmers claimed that while police have seized three tippers linked to the case, six more tippers and a Hitachi mining machine are still present at the site. They also alleged that no FIR has been registered despite the available evidence, raising suspicion about the investigation process.They further alleged that officials including the Tahsildar visited the spot but did not conduct a proper joint panchanama, which they called a biased approach favouring mining interests.The protesting farmers warned that they will continue their agitation until the District Collector personally visits the site, conducts a survey, and ensures justice. They also said they will not release any seized vehicles until their demands are met.The farmers have urged local MLAs and the District Collector to immediately intervene.

QUICK READ

PM Modi pays homage to Rabindranath Tagore

New Delhi
Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday paid tributes to Rabindranath Tagore, calling him a multifaceted personality who shaped several renowned institutions with his writings and thoughts. Rabindranath Tagore was a polymath of the Bengal Renaissance period. He became the first Asian to win a Nobel Prize in any category in 1913, and also the first lyricist and non-European to win the Nobel Prize in Literature. Addressing the 133rd episode of his monthly radio programme, Mann Ki Baat, PM Modi said, Many festivals, including New Year, were celebrated in many parts of the country. In a few days, on May 9, on the occasion of 'Pochishe Boishakh', we will celebrate Gurudev Tagore's birth anniversary. Gurudev was a multifaceted personality.

CEO to visit Kakdwip, Katwa amid reports of voter intimidation

Kolkata
Following reports of voter intimidation in Kakdwip, located in the Diamond Harbour area of South 24 Parganas district, the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) of West Bengal, Manoj Agarwal, is scheduled to visit the region on Sunday to take stock of the situation. As soon as the matter came to light, the election officer in charge in Kakdwip and the police there have been instructed to make arrangements so that voters can cast their votes fearlessly and no one faces any threat. Incidentally, there have been allegations that miscreants on a few bikes were threatening voters in Diamond Harbour.

BJP leaders across India tune in to Modi's 'Mann Ki Baat'

New Delhi
Political leaders across the country joined citizens in listening to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's monthly radio programme 'Mann Ki Baat', as the 133rd episode drew participation from multiple states, reflecting the programme's continued national outreach. Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan listened to the broadcast from his ancestral village, Nalam, in Odisha's Angul district, where he was accompanied by party leaders, workers, and local villagers. The gathering highlighted grassroots engagement with the Prime Minister's address. In West Bengal, Union Minister J.P. Nadda tuned in to the programme at the party office in Bardhaman.

North, Central India sizzle under intense heatwave

Large parts of India are facing intense heatwave with mercury soaring far above seasonal averages; Delhi records season's highest temperature

NEW DELHI

Large parts of India are experiencing an intense heatwave, with temperatures soaring far above seasonal averages and raising serious health concerns. The national capital, Delhi, has been among the worst affected, prompting weather alerts and public safety advisories.According to the India Meteorological Department, Delhi recorded a maximum temperature of 44.5 degrees Celsius the highest so far this season. Conditions remained severe on Sunday, with temperatures continuing above 40 degrees Celsius and hot winds sweeping across the city. Authorities issued a 'yellow alert' to warn residents of the ongoing heatwave-like conditions.

The IMD has forecast that the heatwave will persist across Northwest and Central India until April 28. States including Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh are expected to remain severely affected, with temperatures ranging between 40 and 45 degrees Celsius. In Central India, regions such as Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh, along with the Vidarbha region, are also witnessing extreme heat conditions.

In Uttar Pradesh, the city of Prayagraj recorded a high of 45.2 degrees Celsius, marking the highest temperature in the state so far this season. Authorities have issued severe heat alerts in 32 districts, reflecting the widespread impact of the rising temperatures.

The IMD has further warned that heatwave-like conditions may expand into southern regions, particularly Kerala and the Mahe region, in the coming days. The spread of extreme heat across multiple regions underscores the seriousness of the current weather pattern.

In response, officials have issued advisories urging citizens to take necessary precautions. People are advised to avoid direct exposure to sunlight between noon and 3 p.m., stay well-hydrated, and wear light, loose cotton clothing. The use of protective items such as hats, umbrellas, and sunglasses is strongly recommended.Special caution has been advised for outdoor workers, who are encouraged to keep a damp cloth on their head and neck to reduce heat stress. Authorities have also warned against leaving children or pets inside parked vehicles, as temperatures inside can rise rapidly and become life-threatening.

IMD alerts, forecast

* The weather department's yellow alert for Delhi warns residents to be prepared for heat-related stress.

* Forecasters suggest that while the heatwave will persist through Sunday, a fresh Western Disturbance might bring slight relief to the plains between April 26 and April 28.

* Isolated thunderstorms and gusty winds (30–40 kmph) are expected in some parts of the NCR, which could temporarily pull the mercury down

* Isolated thunderstorms and gusty winds (30–40 kmph) are expected in some parts of the NCR, which could temporarily pull the mercury down.

* The early arrival of such extreme temperatures has raised concerns over public health and power stability. India's peak power demand hit a seasonal high of 240 GW this week as air

* The phenomenon of warm nights, where minimum temperatures remain 2-5 degrees above normal, further prevents the human body from recovering from daytime heat exposure.t

EC ORDERS PROBE OVER VOTER 'INTIMIDATION' IN WB'S DIAMOND HARBOUR

KOLKATA

The action comes amid heightened vigilance to ensure free and fair polling during the ongoing election process

An FIR has been registered in West Bengal's Diamond Harbour following allegations of voter intimidation, after the Election Commission of India intervened in the matter.

The action comes amid heightened vigilance to ensure free and fair polling during the ongoing election process. According to officials, the complaint was received from the Kakdwip area in Diamond Harbour, located in South 24 Parganas. It alleged that a group of individuals riding motorcycles carried out a procession during which threatening slogans were raised, targeting voters in the area.Acting swiftly on the Commission's instructions, police registered a case at the local station within hours of the complaint. Authorities confirmed that the FIR includes multiple charges such as intimidation, issuing threats, attempting to disturb public peace, and obstructing government duties.The complaint further stated that the alleged miscreants openly warned residents that action would be taken against them after May 4, raising concerns over voter safety and participation. Officials emphasized that such incidents are being taken seriously to prevent any disruption to the democratic process.The Election Commission has directed both election officials and law enforcement agencies to take immediate and necessary action, setting a deadline to ensure accountability and maintain order. Measures have been intensified to guarantee that voters can exercise their franchise without fear.Earlier, the Commission had already taken strict steps in the region, including the suspension of five police officers over what it described as serious violations of the code of conduct and failure to maintain impartiality. The suspended officials included senior-ranking officers responsible for maintaining law and order in the area.Diamond Harbour is a politically significant constituency represented by Abhishek Banerjee of the Trinamool Congress. The constituency comprises seven assembly segments and remains a key focus during the elections.While the first phase of polling held on April 23 was largely peaceful, authorities are working to ensure that subsequent phases proceed without incident. Vote counting is scheduled for May 4, and officials continue to stress the importance of maintaining a safe and impartial electoral environment.

Centre approves Rs 947 cr for relief, rehab of riot-hit Manipur

IMPHAL

The Ministry of Home Affairs has sanctioned a total of Rs 947.36 crore to support relief and rehabilitation efforts in Manipur, where prolonged ethnic violence has displaced tens of thousands of people since May 2023.

The financial assistance aims to sustain relief camps and accelerate the resettlement of internally displaced persons across the state.

According to officials, Rs 424.36 crore has been approved for the continued operation of relief camps established by the Manipur government to shelter those affected by the conflict.

In addition, Rs 523 crore has been allocated specifically for the rehabilitation of internally displaced persons, reflecting the Centre's focus on long-term recovery measures.

The details were disclosed in response to a Right to Information query filed by senior Congress leader Hareshwar Goshwami. Data shared by the state Home Department revealed that 58,881 people have been displaced from their homes between May 3, 2023, and March 30, 2026, due to the ongoing ethnic tensions.

As of March 10, 2026, a total of 174 relief camps remained operational, providing essential services and temporary shelter. Authorities have also constructed 3,000 pre-fabricated houses through the Manipur Police Housing Corporation Ltd to accommodate displaced families.The human toll of the violence has been severe, with 217 deaths officially recorded based on compensation provided to victims' families. In addition to loss of life, the conflict has caused extensive damage to infrastructure and housing. Officials reported that 7,894 permanent houses have been completely destroyed, while another 2,646 houses have suffered partial damage.

The violence initially erupted on May 3, 2023, following a Tribal Solidarity March organized in hill districts to oppose the demand for Scheduled Tribe status by the Meitei community. The conflict involved clashes between Meitei and Kuki-Zo groups, deepening existing ethnic divisions in the state.

The Meitei community constitutes approximately 53 percent of Manipur's population and is primarily concentrated in the Imphal Valley. In contrast, tribal groups such as Nagas and Kukis make up around 40 percent and predominantly reside in the hill districts.At the peak of the crisis, more than 300 relief camps were set up, sheltering nearly 60,000 displaced individuals. While the situation has gradually improved and some residents have returned home, many remain dependent on government support.

Chief Minister N. Biren Singh has emphasized that rehabilitation and resettlement of displaced persons remain top priorities, with efforts underway to restore normalcy and rebuild affected communities.

Singh seeks disqualification of 7 defected AAP MPs

NEW DELHI

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Rajya Sabha member Sanjay Singh on Sunday said that the membership of the seven MPs who recently left the party and are set to join the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) will be cancelled under constitutional provisions.Singh said the AAP has filed a petition under the Tenth Schedule of the Constitution and requested Rajya Sabha Chairman C. P. Radhakrishnan to conduct an early hearing and deliver a fair decision.The developmen comes after Rajya Sabha member Raghav Chadha announced his resignation from AAP on Friday, along with six other MPs -- Swati Maliwal, Harbhajan Singh, Sandeep Pathak, Ashok Mittal, Rajinder Gupta and Vikram Sahni -- all of whom are expected to join the BJP.

Swachh Bharat: Russian Embassy in Delhi holds cleanliness drive

NEW DELHI

The campaign brought together diplomats, officials, and staff members to promote environmental awareness and civic responsibility.

The cleanliness drive was conducted in and around the embassy's residential premises, where participants actively engaged in cleaning activities and waste collection. The initiative aimed to send a strong message about the importance of maintaining clean surroundings and fostering a culture of environmental consciousness.

Denis Alipov, who participated in the drive, described the effort as a symbolic yet meaningful contribution to a global cause. He remarked that although civic authorities such as the New Delhi Municipal Council have already maintained high cleanliness standards in the area, the embassy was keen to make its own contribution.

He emphasized that environmental responsibility is a shared global duty, stating that cleaner surroundings lead to healthier societies and a better world. He also highlighted that pollution continues to be a major concern for countries worldwide, including India, and noted that voluntary initiatives like this play a crucial role in addressing such challenges.

Diana Alipov, spouse of the ambassador, underscored the importance of behavioural change in tackling environmental issues. She pointed out that educating people against littering is one of the most effective steps toward long-term improvement. According to her, such drives serve as an example for both adults and younger generations, encouraging responsible habits.

Participants in the campaign described the experience as both meaningful and rewarding. One attendee said the initiative was a positive step toward building a cleaner environment and fostering collective responsibility. Another participant highlighted that such activities are part of a broader cultural tradition, where people come together for a common cause, strengthening teamwork and shared values.

The event also reflected the deepening ties between India and Russia beyond strategic and economic cooperation. By collaborating on social and environmental initiatives, both nations continue to reinforce their commitment to sustainability, civic engagement, and global well-being.

PILGRIMS' HEALTHCARE

Char Dham Yatra: Health camps, OPDs function along route

RISHIKESH

Prajapati Nautiyal, Officer on Special Duty (OSD) for the Char Dham Yatra Administration Organisation, on Sunday said that special transit camps have been put up on the 'yatra' route for pilgrims to undergo health screenings. Along with this, the officer said that Out Patient Departments (OPDs) have also been set up along the path leading to the pilgrimage sites.This year the Char Dham Yatra began on April 19 with the opening of the portals of Yamunotri and Gangotri temples. The Kedarnath Dham and Badrinath Dham were opened on April 22 and 23 respectively.Nautiyal urged the people undertaking the Hindu pilgrimage, to thoroughly read and understand the health advisory that has been issued by the Health Department.We expect all pilgrims to read and understand this advisory before starting their journey and plan accordingly. If you feel any symptoms such as dizziness, chest pain, or headache, you should get proper health screening done or visit an OPD and consult the medical teams available along the 'yatra' routes, he said.About the transit camps, he said: Here we have five teams for health screening. Those pilgrims who are more than 50 years of age are getting themselves screened here for blood pressure, sugar levels etc.In addition, he said, We also have OPD facility here where pilgrims are taking the required medicines in a proper way. Nautiyal mentioned that according to the data received so far, more than 1000 pilgrims have already undertaken screening at the health camps and have utilised the OPD facility.The officer also noted that camps have been arranged for pilgrims to take rest.The government and the administration have made arrangements at several areas of the 'yatra' route, where the pilgrims can halt and take rest from time to time.He underlined that such preparations have especially been made, citing the weather and terrain of the route undertaken by pilgrims.Nautiyal hoped for all pilgrims to have a fulfilling journey.The government and the administration are making all possible efforts to make the journey a safe and successful one. The Chief Minister (Pushkar Singh Dhami) is also constantly monitoring the yatra, he added.

KEY POINTS
* Health screening camps set up along Char Dham Yatra route
* OPDs installed for pilgrim medical care
* Over 1,000 pilgrims screened so far
* Advisory urges pilgrims to check symptoms like dizziness and chest pain
* Rest camps arranged considering weather and terrain

QUICK READ

V-P to lead centenary celebrations of Andhra University today

New Delhi
Vice-President (V-P) C.P. Radhakrishnan will address students, faculty and alumni at the centenary celebrations of Andhra University in Visakhapatnam on Monday, the first day of his two-day visit to Andhra Pradesh, an official said on Sunday. Apart from the Vice-President, cricket legend Sachin Tendulkar, and other dignitaries are expected to attend the celebrations on Monday. Earlier, addressing the 35th convocation ceremony of the University of Rajasthan in Jaipur on Saturday, Vice-President Radhakrishnan urged youth to become job creators and nation-builders. He said the university continues to shape generations of thinkers, leaders and change-makers committed to knowledge, integrity and service.

BJP chief Nitin Nabin calls Rahul Gandhi 'part-time politician'

Kolkata
Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) President Nitin Nabin on Sunday launched a scathing attack on Congress MP and Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, calling him a 'part-time politician' for addressing the public only during election campaigns. Nabin took part in a roadshow at Shantipur in Nadia district of West Bengal ahead of the second phase of the Assembly polls to be held on April 29. He questioned: Has Rahul Gandhi ever been seen taking part in any movement or speaking on any issue? The BJP chief alleged that the Congress leader only speaks.

HPCL pins refinery fire to leak, ops likely from May second half

New Delhi
Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd has said a leak from a pressure gauge in its crude distillation unit was the likely cause of the fire at its joint venture refinery in Rajasthan, and restoration work is expected to be completed within three to four weeks, after which operations at the refinery will restart in the second half of May. A major fire broke out at the newly built Rs 79,450-crore HPCL Rajasthan Refinery Ltd. on April 20, a day before the scheduled inauguration.

UP NOW FREE OF MAFIA RULE: YOGI

The CM was attending the passing-out parade of over 60,000 UP police constables

LUCKNOW

Yogi Adityanath on Sunday attended a large-scale passing-out parade in Lucknow, marking the completion of training for the first-ever batch of 60,244 Constable Civil Police recruits of 2025.

The ceremony highlighted discipline, dedication, and the growing modernization of the state police force.

The Chief Minister reviewed the parade and presented awards to recruits who excelled in various training categories, praising their commitment and performance. He particularly lauded the participation and achievements of women recruits, calling their strength, readiness, and discipline highly commendable.

Addressing the newly inducted personnel, Adityanath emphasized that discipline and teamwork form the backbone of any uniformed force. He stated that rigorous training prepares officers to handle challenging situations effectively, noting that the effort invested during training reduces the likelihood of conflict in real-life scenarios. He expressed confidence that the recruits would uphold the traditions of the Uttar Pradesh Police with integrity, honesty, and a strong sense of duty.The Chief Minister also stressed the importance of maintaining a balanced approach in policing. He said the law must remain strict and uncompromising when dealing with criminals, while also being sensitive and responsive to the needs of ordinary citizens.

The passing-out parade was conducted simultaneously across the state at multiple locations, including 10 police training institutions, police lines in 73 districts, 29 Provincial Armed Constabulary battalions, and 112 recruit training centres. This coordinated effort underscored the scale of the recruitment and training exercise.The recruitment process had earlier gained momentum when Amit Shah distributed appointment letters to the selected candidates on June 15, 2025, held in Lucknow. Training for the recruits officially began on July 21, 2025.

Reflecting on past challenges, he noted that before 2017, police infrastructure in the state was inadequate, with many personnel living in poor conditions.

The CM highlighted that significant improvements have since been made, including the development of modern residential and barrack facilities in 55 districts.He further stated that training systems have been upgraded with the introduction of professional modules and digital platforms such as the UP Police Training Portal.

Zojila Avalanche: Srinagar-Leh highway closed

SRINAGAR

The Srinagar-Leh highway has been closed for vehicular movement after an avalanche hit the Zojila Pass in Ladakh.

Three drivers trapped after the avalanche struck Zojila have been rescued safely, while damaged vehicles have been retrieved, the officials said.

The avalanche struck on Sunday near Shaitani Nallah in the Drass sector, where multiple vehicles, including two tankers moving from Sonamarg towards Kargil, were hit and pushed off the road.Teams from UTDRF Kargil, Police Station Drass, and volunteers carried out the operation and evacuated the drivers safely.

Modi highlights BJP's focus on women safety at Bengal rally

KOLKATA

He made the remarks during a campaign rally in North 24 Parganas district ahead of the ongoing Assembly elections. Addressing a gathering in Thakurnagar, Modi said that fielding Swapna Debnath, mother of the victim in the 2024 rape-murder case at R.G. Kar Medical College and Hospital, demonstrates the party's stand on justice and security for women. Debnath has been nominated from the Panihati Assembly constituency, located in North 24 Parganas district.The Prime Minister criticized the ruling Trinamool Congress, alleging that women in the state have suffered under what he described as a breakdown of law and order. He claimed that incidents of violence, harassment, and disappearances of women have increased during the current regime, and accused ruling party supporters of enabling such acts.Referring to incidents in Sandeshkhali, Modi alleged that women were subjected to abuse and intimidation, and said that such cases reflect a larger pattern of insecurity. He stated that the anger among women voters is evident and suggested that high voter turnout in the first phase of polling on April 23 indicates a strong public response to these concerns.Modi further emphasized that the BJP's approach goes beyond electoral politics, highlighting past instances where the party nominated women who had faced or protested injustice. He said that such decisions underline a broader commitment to standing with victims and ensuring accountability.The Prime Minister also outlined his party's vision for the state, stating that if voted to power, the BJP would focus not only on strengthening women's safety but also on promoting their empowerment through policy measures and social initiatives. He stressed the importance of creating an environment where women can live with dignity, security, and equal opportunities.The remarks come amid an intense political contest in West Bengal, where issues of governance, law and order, and women's safety have emerged as key themes in the ongoing election campaign.

He asserted that the nomination of the mother of the RG Kar Hospital rape-murder victim as a candidate reflects the BJP's commitment to women's safety

Delhi govt steps up heat wave action plan 2026 amid rising temperatures

NEW DELHI

The measures aim to strengthen healthcare readiness, improve access to drinking water, and protect vulnerable populations from extreme heat. In a post on X, the Chief Minister outlined a comprehensive set of initiatives being rolled out across the city to mitigate the impact of heatwaves.

She stated that more than 339 health centres have been equipped with essential medicines and medical supplies to handle heat-related illnesses efficiently.

Additionally, over 30 hospitals have set up dedicated cool rooms to provide immediate relief to individuals suffering from heat stress and heatstroke. These facilities are expected to play a critical role during peak summer months when cases of dehydration and heat exhaustion typically rise.

To strengthen emergency response systems, the government has deployed around 330 ambulances for round-the-clock service. Medical staff have also undergone specialised training to manage heatstroke cases and related emergencies more effectively, ensuring quicker and more efficient treatment.

Recognising the importance of hydration, authorities are installing Water ATMs, more than 1,900 water coolers, and

over 11,000 cooling points across strategic locations in the city.

These facilities are particularly aimed at supporting outdoor workers, daily wage earners, and commuters who are most exposed to extreme temperatures.

The government has also taken preventive steps in educational institutions by introducing a Water Bell System, which reminds students to drink water at regular intervals.

Moreover, working hours in certain sectors have been adjusted to minimise exposure to peak heat periods, especially for labour-intensive outdoor jobs.

Gupta urged residents to adopt personal safety measures, such as avoiding direct sunlight during peak hours, staying hydrated, and checking on elderly family members and neighbours who may be more vulnerable to heat-related health risks.

ODISHA CM'S GRIEVANCE CELL SHUT ON APRIL 27

BHUBANESWAR

Authorities have announced that the Chief Minister's Grievance Cell will remain closed on April 27 due to the ongoing heat wave, prioritising public safety. The decision comes as temperatures continue to soar, raising concerns over health risks for citizens.

The General Administration and Public Grievances Department confirmed that the scheduled public grievance hearing has been postponed in view of the extreme weather conditions. The programme was set to be held near the former Government Primary School (Capital Nursery) at Unit-2 in Ashok Nagar, but officials deemed it unsafe for public gatherings under the prevailing circumstances.

As per the department, the move is a precautionary measure aimed at protecting citizens from heat-related illnesses such as dehydration and heatstroke. With temperatures remaining unusually high, large outdoor gatherings pose a significant health risk, particularly for elderly individuals and those with pre-existing conditions.

Officials also clarified that citizens who have already registered their complaints through the Jan Sunani portal do not need to submit their applications again. Their grievances will remain valid and will be addressed once the hearing is rescheduled.

The department assured that a new date for the grievance hearing will be announced soon. Information regarding the revised schedule will be disseminated through newspapers, television channels, and other media platforms to ensure that all registered applicants receive timely updates.Public grievance hearings are an important platform for citizens to directly present their concerns to government authorities.

However, officials emphasised that public safety remains the top priority, especially during extreme weather conditions.The postponement reflects a broader trend of administrative caution as several regions across the country continue to experience intense heat waves. Authorities have urged residents to take necessary precautions, avoid unnecessary outdoor exposure, and stay hydrated during peak daytime hours.

Further updates regarding the rescheduled grievance hearing are expected to be announced shortly once weather conditions improve.

Wedding party bus overturns in Sonepur, 14 injured

BHUBANESWAR

A bus carrying a wedding procession overturned on Sunday morning near Mahadevpali outpost in Sonepur district, leaving more than 14 passengers injured.

The accident occurred under the jurisdiction of Binika Police Station while the group was returning from a marriage ceremony.According to initial reports, the bus was transporting members of a wedding party from the Kamgaon area in Bargarh district who had travelled to the Boudh region for a ceremony.

The group was on its way back to the groom's residence when the vehicle reportedly lost control near Kartang Chack and overturned.At the time of the accident, around 54 passengers were on board. The sudden mishap caused panic among the passengers, with several sustaining injuries of varying severity. Local residents quickly rushed to the scene and played a crucial role in rescuing those trapped inside the overturned vehicle.

The injured were immediately shifted to nearby healthcare facilities for treatment. Three individuals were admitted to the Binika Medical Center, while 12 others were referred to the District Hospital in Sonepur for further medical care. Authorities stated that all the injured are currently receiving treatment and are under observation.

Police personnel from the Binika Police Station reached the accident site soon after being alerted and began preliminary inquiries into the incident. Officials are investigating the circumstances that led to the driver losing control of the bus, including possible factors such as road conditions, mechanical failure, or driver error.

Scindia inaugurates 'Adani Vikas Kendra' in MP's Shivpuri

NEW DELHI

Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia has inaugurated an Adani Vikas Kendra in Madhya Pradesh's Shivpuri district, marking a step toward expanding livelihood opportunities for women through skill development and garment manufacturing.

Located in Badarwas, the facility spans 48,000 square feet and is equipped with 600 modern sewing machines.

It has been designed to function as both a training hub and a production centre, enabling women to gain employable skills while participating in organised manufacturing activity.Addressing the gathering, Scindia highlighted the broader impact of such initiatives, saying the project reflects the power of aspiration taking shape at the grassroots level.He also acknowledged the efforts of Adani Group Chairman Gautam Adani and the Adani Foundation in creating opportunities that can connect local skills to wider markets.What we are witnessing in Badarwas is the power of aspiration taking shape. I congratulate Gautam Adani, Chairman.

Government of Karnataka
Public Works Department
Office of the Executive Engineer,
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IFT No.36/2025-26/CALL-2 Dt.22.04.2026
ITEM WISE SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION

On behalf of the Governor of Karnataka, Executive Engineer, Public Works Department has published item wise Tender notification for a work approved under H/A:5054-80-190-0-01-132-KRDCL-Capital Expenditure Construction of a bridge at chainage 5.20 km near Uppinahalli village on the road connecting Nanjangud Punjnur road to Naviluru via Devarasanahalli Uppinahalli Kalale Masage Echgundla in Nanjangud Taluk under this division with KW- 4 Conditions & Regulations with Two cover systems. For Above said work **EMD amount is Rs.2.00 Lakhs.** Pre bid Meeting will be held in the under signed office at 11.00 A.M on 28.04.2026 Tenders shall be Submitted in KPP-Portal **(https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in) from 22.04.2026 to 30.04.2026 within 17.00 PM.** KPWD Class-III & Above Contractor Registered in KPP-Portal are eligible.
More details can be obtained from the office of the under Signed during office hours. Any amendments or modifications in tender notification will be published in KPP-Portal Only.

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
Public Work Department, Mysuru Division, Mysuru
DIPR/DDMYS/98/KSMCA/88/2026-27

HEAD COUNT ON

Digital Census 2027: Reddy completes self-enumeration

HYDERABAD

A. Revanth Reddy on Sunday participated in the self-enumeration process for Census 2027, marking the beginning of a major digital data collection exercise in Telangana. The initiative is part of India's first fully digital census and aims to improve accuracy and efficiency through public participation.

The Chief Minister completed his self-enumeration by registering details on the official census web portal, setting an

example for citizens across the state. During the programme, census officials briefed him on the procedures, technical aspects, and the broader significance of self-enumeration in ensuring reliable demographic data.

Reddy urged residents to actively participate in the process, emphasizing that accurate data collection is essential for effective governance, policy planning, and development initiatives. He highlighted that the success of the census depends largely on voluntary public involvement and awareness.The self-enumeration phase in Telangana's Core Urban Region began on Sunday and will continue until May 10. This phase covers key urban areas including Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation, Cyberabad Municipal Corporation, and Malkajgiri Municipal Corporation, all treated as a single census unit for this exercise.According to Bharati Holikeri, Director of Census Operations for Telangana, the online portal includes 33 questions covering housing conditions, amenities, and household assets. The process is designed to be user-friendly, requiring no documentation and taking approximately 15 to 20 minutes to complete.Residents can access the portal daily between 6 a.m. and midnight to submit their information.

QUICK READ

Americans oppose ending birth-right citizenship

Washington
A majority of Americans believe all babies born in the country should automatically be granted citizenship, according to a Reuters/Ipsos poll carried out as the U.S. Supreme Court prepares to rule on President Donald Trump's effort to end the practice. The high court is poised to rule in the coming weeks on a range of polarizing issues - from immigration policy and transgender rights to rules on how to count mail-in ballots - that could help define the Republican president's legacy and set key rules for the November 3 midterm elections. The poll, conducted nationwide April 15-20, found that 64% of Americans oppose ending birthright citizenship, while 32% support scrapping it as Trump ordered in January 2025.

Gunfire in Mali town as UN urges intl response after attacks

Bamako
Sustained gunfire rang out in a garrison town near Mali's capital on Sunday, a witness said, a day after an al Qaeda affiliate and Tuareg rebels carried out one of the largest coordinated attacks in the country in recent years. The gunfire in the town of Kati suggested that fighting had entered a second day, despite the army saying it had reasserted control. The United Nations called for an international response to violence and terrorism in the West Africa Sahel region following Saturday's large-scale assaults. The Secretary General is deeply concerned by reports of attacks in several locations across Mali. He strongly condemns these acts of violence, a U.N. spokesperson posted on X.

Magyar to meet Leyen for talks on EU funds this week

Budapest
Hungary's incoming prime minister Peter Magyar said on Sunday he would go to Brussels on Wednesday for informal talks with European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen to unblock funds frozen by the bloc over disputes with his predecessor. There is no time to waste, Magyar, whose landslide victory in an April 12 election ended nationalist Prime Minister Viktor Orban's 16-year rule, said in a statement. Magyar had previously outlined four key areas where his cabinet could move swiftly to avoid the loss of some 10 billion euros ($11.7 billion) of EU pandemic recovery funding by an end-August deadline, including measures to battle corruption and restore media and academic freedoms. He said after the election that he was hoping for a political agreement during his first visit to Brussels.

Diplomatic hopes fade as US-Israel conflict with Iran stalls

Efforts to secure a diplomatic breakthrough in the ongoing US-Israel-Iran war appears to lose momentum as both sides harden their positions

ISLAMABAD

Despite mediation attempts and a temporary pause in large-scale fighting, no concrete progress has been made toward ending a war that continues to impact global stability.

The conflict, which began on February 28 with coordinated strikes by the United States and Israel on Iranian targets, has since escalated into a prolonged geopolitical crisis. Although a ceasefire has temporarily halted full-scale military operations, the absence of a formal agreement has prolonged uncertainty and tension across the region.

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi returned to the Middle East after participating in mediation talks in Pakistan, signaling limited progress in negotiations. Meanwhile, U.S. President Donald Trump cancelled a planned diplomatic visit to Islamabad by his envoys Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner, citing concerns over travel costs and dissatisfaction with Iran's proposals.

The war has already claimed thousands of lives and triggered significant economic repercussions. Global oil markets have been shaken, largely due to Iran's move to restrict access through the Strait of Hormuz, a critical route responsible for transporting a substantial share of the world's oil and liquefied natural gas. In response, Washington has imposed a maritime blockade on Iranian ports, further intensifying economic pressure.

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian, in a conversation with Shehbaz Sharif, firmly rejected the idea of negotiations under coercion. He stated that Iran would not engage in what he described as imposed negotiations while facing threats and blockades. Tehran has insisted that the United States must first lift its maritime restrictions before any meaningful dialogue can begin.

Despite the setbacks, Araqchi described his diplomatic engagement in Pakistan as productive. Following his visit to Islamabad, he traveled to Oman, another key mediator, where he held discussions with Sultan Haitham bin Tariq aimed at de-escalating the conflict. Reports indicate he is expected to continue diplomatic efforts with a visit to Russia.

Speaking earlier in Florida, President Trump stated that Iran had made concessions but not enough to justify continued diplomatic engagement at this stage. The cancellation of the U.S. envoys' visit underscores the widening gap between the two sides.

As the conflict remains unresolved, concerns are growing over its broader consequences, including rising inflation, disrupted energy supplies, and a weakening global economic outlook. Diplomatic channels remain open, but prospects for a swift resolution appear increasingly uncertain.

Israeli strikes in Gaza kill 4 as ceasefire fragility persists

CAIRO

The latest violence highlights the continued instability in the region despite an existing ceasefire, with both sides accusing each other of repeated violations.

Medical sources in the Gaza Strip reported that an Israeli airstrike near the central village of Al-Mughraqa killed one person.

Additional casualties were reported near Gaza City, where Israeli gunfire and tank shelling resulted in the deaths of two more individuals. In a separate incident in Khan Younis, a 40-year-old woman was shot and killed, further intensifying concerns over civilian safety in the conflict zone.

The Israeli military stated that it was not immediately aware of operations linked to the incident in Khan Younis but confirmed it is reviewing reports of the other strikes. In a separate statement, Israeli authorities said their forces had targeted and killed several militants affiliated with Hamas in Gaza in recent days.

Violence has persisted in the enclave despite a ceasefire agreement reached in October 2025, which was intended to bring an end to months of intense fighting. However, near-daily military actions and retaliatory measures have continued, undermining hopes for sustained peace.

According to local health authorities, at least 800 Palestinians have been killed since the ceasefire came into effect. Israel, on the other hand, reports that militant activity during the same period has led to the deaths of four of its soldiers. Both Israel and Hamas have traded accusations over breaches of the truce, reflecting deep mistrust and ongoing hostilities.

The broader conflict, which began in October 2023, has resulted in devastating human losses. Gaza health officials estimate that more than 72,500 Palestinians have been killed, the majority of them civilians. The war was triggered by the October 7, 2023, attacks carried out by Hamas on Israel, which Israeli authorities say left approximately 1,200 people dead.

As tensions remain high, the continued cycle of violence underscores the fragile nature of the ceasefire and the urgent need for renewed diplomatic efforts to prevent further loss of life in the region.

Colombia explosives attack kills 13

BOGOTA

At least 13 people were killed and 17 others injured in a powerful explosives attack in western Colombia on Saturday, authorities confirmed. The incident, which targeted a key highway, has been blamed on dissident factions of the former guerrilla group FARC, raising fresh concerns about escalating violence in the region.

The attack occurred along the Pan-American Highway in the El Tunel area of Cajibio municipality, located roughly 35 kilometers from Popayan, the capital of Cauca province. According to police sources, the explosion caused significant casualties and damage, underscoring the persistent security challenges in one of Colombia's most conflict-affected regions.

Local officials described the bombing as part of a broader wave of coordinated violence. Cauca Governor Octavio Guzman stated that multiple criminal incidents were reported across the province on the same day. He called on the national government to take urgent and decisive action to restore order, warning that the region is facing a serious public security crisis.

Political reactions were swift and sharply critical. Paloma Valencia, a prominent opposition figure from the Democratic Center party, condemned the attack as an act of terrorism. She accused dissident elements of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia of carrying out the bombing and criticized the government's approach to security. Valencia urged stronger support for the country's armed forces and police, as well as immediate measures to curb the violence.

The dissident factions blamed for the attack are groups that refused to accept the 2016 peace agreement between the Colombian government and the main FARC leadership. Despite the historic accord, these breakaway groups have continued armed activities, particularly in rural and strategically important areas such as Cauca.

President Gustavo Petro, whose administration has promoted a total peace strategy through negotiations and temporary ceasefires with armed groups, has faced mounting criticism over the persistence of violence. Critics argue that the policy has failed to deliver lasting security improvements, while supporters maintain that dialogue remains the only viable long-term solution.

The latest attack highlights the fragile security situation in Colombia and the ongoing challenges of consolidating peace nearly a decade after the landmark agreement.

WASHINGTON FIRING

UK tightens security ahead of King Charles' US visit

LONDON

The British government has reaffirmed its close coordination with United States security agencies ahead of King Charles III' upcoming visit, following a shooting incident in Washington that triggered heightened safety concerns.

Officials emphasized that extensive preparations are underway to ensure the monarch's security during the high-profile trip.

The reassurance comes after a security scare at a major political event in Washington, where Donald Trump and Melania Trump were escorted to safety by Secret Service agents after gunfire erupted near the venue. The incident has prompted renewed scrutiny of protective arrangements for global leaders visiting the United States.

Speaking to media, Darren Jones stated that both the British government and Buckingham Palace are treating the monarch's safety with the highest level of seriousness. He confirmed that British and American security services are working in close coordination and will continue to do so in the days leading up to the visit.

King Charles III, accompanied by Queen Camilla, is scheduled to arrive in the United States on Monday for a four-day official trip. The visit is expected to include a private meeting with President Trump as well as an address to the United States Congress.

The timing of the trip carries symbolic importance, as it coincides with the 250th anniversary of the United States' declaration of independence from British rule. The visit is being closely watched as a moment of diplomatic significance, reflecting the enduring relationship between the two nations despite their historical differences.

Security experts note that incidents such as the recent shooting highlight the complex challenges involved in safeguarding high-profile figures during international engagements. The coordination between intelligence agencies, law enforcement, and diplomatic teams is seen as critical to mitigating risks.

As preparations continue, British officials remain confident that comprehensive measures will be in place to ensure the smooth and secure conduct of the royal visit, even as heightened vigilance remains a top priority in light of recent events.

Russian Defence chief visits N. Korea amid deepening military ties

MOSCOW

Russia has stepped up its diplomatic and military engagement with North Korea as Defence Minister Andrei Belousov arrived in Pyongyang on Sunday.

The visit marks a continuation of high-level exchanges between the two nations, signaling a strengthening strategic partnership amid ongoing global tensions.

Belousov's arrival comes just days after another senior Russian official, Vyacheslav Volodin, reached North Korea's capital. According to state media reports, Volodin is expected to attend the inauguration of a newly constructed memorial dedicated to North Korean soldiers who reportedly lost their lives while supporting Russian efforts in the war in Ukraine.

The Russian defence ministry stated that Belousov will engage in discussions with North Korea's senior leadership and military officials during his visit. He is also scheduled to participate in ceremonial and commemorative events, underscoring the symbolic and strategic importance of the trip.

In a parallel development, Russian President Vladimir Putin sent a formal message to North Korean leader Kim Jong Un on the occasion of the memorial's opening. In his message, Putin expressed gratitude toward Kim and North Korean forces for their alleged role in assisting Russia in countering a Ukrainian incursion into the Kursk region. He also emphasized confidence in the continued growth of bilateral ties.

Relations between Moscow and Pyongyang have significantly strengthened over the past few years, particularly since 2023. A key milestone was the meeting between Putin and Kim in June 2024, during which both leaders signed a comprehensive strategic agreement that includes a mutual defence pact. This agreement has laid the foundation for expanded cooperation in military, political, and economic domains.

The growing alignment between Russia and North Korea has drawn attention from the international community, especially amid the ongoing conflict in Ukraine. Analysts suggest that such high-level visits reflect a broader effort by both nations to consolidate alliances and counterbalance Western influence.

As Belousov's visit unfolds, observers will closely watch for any announcements or agreements that may further deepen military collaboration between the two countries, potentially reshaping regional and global security dynamics.

Swiz angers Italy by claiming costs of treating Crans-Montana fire victims

ZURICH

Switzerland will charge Rome for the costs its health system sustained to treat Italian nationals wounded in the New Year's Eve fire at the Crans-Montana ski resort, which claimed 41 lives, the government's office in charge of social insurance matters said.

The expense claim adds further strain to the relationship between the two countries, with Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni on Friday describing the move as disgraceful following news that the families of the fire victims had been billed.

In a statement to Reuters late on Saturday, the Federal Social Insurance Office (FSIO) confirmed plans for Switzerland to recoup the money spent on hospital treatment, though not from the families of the victims.

The FSIO said that, under current agreements between the EU member states and Switzerland, the victims would receive an invoice only for verification purposes and the costs charged to the relevant foreign health insurer.

A spokesperson later clarified that in Italy's case that would be the health ministry.

Meloni said in a post on Facebook late on Friday: Should this disgraceful request be made formally, I hereby announce that Italy will reject it outright and will not act upon it in any way.

I have faith in the Swiss authorities' sense of responsibility and hope that the report will prove to be entirely unfounded, she added.

Switzerland is asking for more than 100,000 Swiss francs ($127,000) in refunds for four Italian nationals treated for just one day at the Sion hospital after the blaze, Italian ambassador to Switzerland Gian Lorenzo Cornado was quoted as saying on Saturday by news agency ANSA.

Cornado added Swiss patients wounded in the Cans-Montana fire have been treated for months at the Niguarda hospital in Milan, northern Italy, and that Italy sent a civil protection helicopter to assist with rescue operations without asking for any money.

THE MONK AND THE TRILLIONAIRE

Pradivya Nambiar

What Does It Mean to Live Well? In today's world—where success is loudly celebrated and spirituality is quietly rising—what does it really mean to be rich? What does it mean to have nothing? And most importantly, how does one find balance between these two extremes? In an age where success is measured in valuations and visibility, the idea of "having it all" has never been more seductive—or more complicated. At one end stands the modern trillionaire: powerful, influential, and capable of shaping industries and economies. At the other, a monk: owning nothing, removed from ambition, yet deeply anchored in peace.

Both lives hold value. Both come with a cost. The trillionaire's world is one of scale and speed. Problems are solved instantly. Access is unlimited. Comfort is engineered to perfection. There is the ability to create jobs, influence systems, and build a legacy that outlives generations. This path demands discipline, intelligence, and resilience—qualities that deserve recognition. But beneath that success lies a quieter tension.

With great wealth comes constant responsibility. Assets must be protected. Decisions carry enormous consequences. Relationships can become transactional, where trust is often questioned rather than assumed. Privacy is rare. Even generosity is scrutinised, often seen as strategy rather than sincerity.

Over time, abundance can begin to feel less like freedom and more like weight. The monk lives differently. There are no balance sheets, no negotiations, no expectations to uphold. The day unfolds simply—through prayer, service, and silence.

There is little to manage and even less to lose. Yet within that simplicity lies something increasingly rare: a steady mind.

The monk's wealth is internal. It is found in presence rather than possession, in awareness rather than accumulation. Free from the pressure to achieve or maintain status, there is space for clarity—and often, a deeper sense of contentment. This contrast raises an uncomfortable question: if both lives are intentional, why does one seem to strive endlessly while the other rests? For many, this is not just philosophical—it is personal.

I find myself standing between these two worlds. I have lived with very little and experienced a kind of quiet completeness that is hard to explain but impossible to ignore. In those moments, peace came easily. Gratitude was natural. Sleep was undisturbed.

And yet, there is another side that calls me back—the world of business, of building, of movement and measurable growth. It offers purpose, momentum, and the ability to create impact. But it also brings long days, restless nights, and the subtle cost of constant striving. One life offers stillness without financial certainty.

The other offers financial certainty without guaranteed stillness.

The dilemma is not between good and bad—but between two very different definitions of a life well lived. There is, however, a third way—one that does not demand choosing between the monk and the trillionaire. Material success, when approached with awareness, can become a powerful tool rather than a burden. It allows one to create opportunities, support others, and contribute meaningfully to the world.

At the same time, a spiritual foundation offers clarity, grounding, and resilience—ensuring that success does not come at the cost of one's inner life. The balance lies not in abandoning ambition, but in refining it. To build without attachment to achieve without losing perspective. To create space for stillness—even within movement. Because most people cannot—and need not—walk away from their lives to find peace. The real work is learning to re

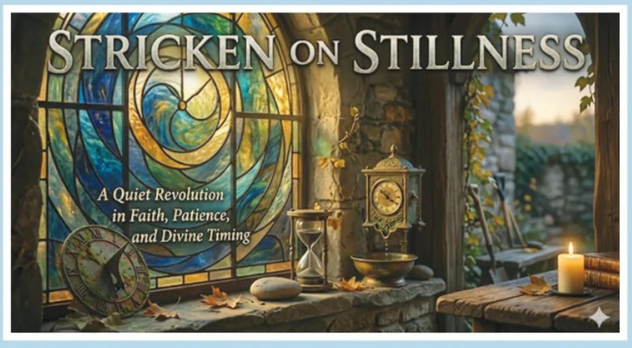
main centred while fully engaged with the world.

To work without losing rest. To earn without losing perspective. To succeed without losing oneself. Because in the end, true wealth may not be measured by what we accumulate—but by how deeply we are anchored within ourselves.

STRICKEN ON STILLNESS — A Quiet Revolution in Faith, Patience, and Divine Timing

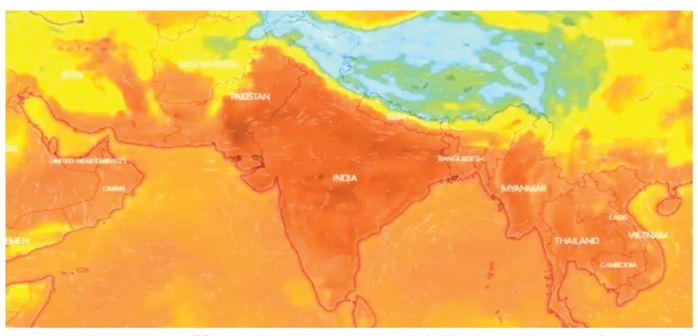
Pradivya Nambiar

In today's world, being busy is worn like a badge of honour. Full calendars, constant notifications, back-to-back conversations—these have quietly become the measure of a "productive" life. To pause, to sit without agenda, to have empty time… is often seen as laziness. Somewhere along the way, we were conditioned to believe that stillness means falling behind. But if we look closely, that belief deserves to be questioned. Not everything valuable comes from constant movement. In fact, some of the most important decisions, ideas, and shifts in life don't happen in the middle of noise—they emerge in moments where there is space to think, to observe, and to simply be. Yet, these are the very moments we've trained ourselves to avoid. The instant there is silence, we reach for a screen. The moment there is a gap, we fill it. The second things slow down, we assume something is wrong. What if nothing is wrong? What if that pause is not emptiness—but a different kind of work taking place? Across cultures and time, those who have had the deepest clarity—whether thinkers, creators, or spiritual masters—have all shared one thing in common: the ability to sit with themselves without distraction. Not as an escape from life, but as a way to understand it more clearly. Stillness is not about withdrawing from responsibility. It is about stepping out of constant reaction. It allows you to see patterns you would otherwise miss. It gives decisions time to mature instead of being rushed. It creates a distance between you and the noise, so you can choose rather than simply respond. And perhaps most importantly—it removes the pressure to constantly prove that you are "doing something." Because not all progress is visible. Some of it is internal. Some of it is quiet. And some of it only makes sense in hindsight. In a society that celebrates speed, choosing stillness can feel unnatural. But it may also be one of the most necessary corrections of our time. Not everything in life needs to be chased. Some things require you to slow down long enough…



THE FEVERED GIANT: NAVIGATING THE ERA OF THE SUPER EL NIÑO IN INDIA

For centuries, the Indian monsoon has been described as the "real Finance Minister" of the country. It is a rhythmic, seasonal heartbeat that dictates the pulse of the economy, the contents of the dinner plate, and the survival of millions. However, that heartbeat is becoming increasingly erratic. Standing at the center of this disruption is a climate phenomenon born thousands of miles away in the tropical Pacific: the Super El Niño.When the Pacific Ocean warms to extraordinary levels, it triggers a domino effect that reshapes the atmosphere.



For India, this "fever" in the ocean translates to a parched landscape, economic strain, and a fundamental challenge to public health. Understanding the Super El Niño is no longer just a task for meteorologists; it is a necessity for every citizen living under its shadow.

The Atmospheric Hijack: Reshaping the Monsoon

A Super El Niño isn't just a slightly warmer year; it is a systemic overhaul of global weather patterns.

Typically, the monsoon is driven by a pressure gradient that pulls moist air from the Indian Ocean toward the subcontinent.

A Super El Niño weakens this mechanism by shifting atmospheric circulation.

Weakened Low-Pressure Systems: The phenomenon suppresses the formation of low-pressure areas in the Bay of Bengal, which are essential for distributing rain across Central and Northern India.

Rainfall Deficits: Historically, Super El Niño years have seen monsoon deficits exceeding 10% to 15%, leading to widespread drought conditions.

Erratic Distribution: Even when rain does fall, it often comes in short, violent bursts rather than steady, nourishing showers. This leads to the paradox of simultaneous floods and droughts in different states.

Fields of Dust: The Agricultural Toll

Agriculture remains the backbone of rural India, employing nearly half the workforce. When the monsoon fails, the impact is immediate and devastating. The timing of a Super El Niño often coincides with the Kharif (summer) sowing season, leaving farmers staring at cracked earth.

Impact on Crop Yields

The primary victims are water-intensive crops. Rice, sugarcane, and maize yields often plummet. Pulses and oilseeds, which are heavily dependent on rain-fed irrigation, see significant production drops.

The Financial Spiral

As yields shrink, farmer incomes evaporate. Many small-scale farmers operate on thin margins, and a single failed season can lead to a cycle of debt. The psychological toll is equally heavy, as rural communities grapple with the uncertainty of their primary livelihood.

A Nation Under Heat: Public Health Risks

The Super El Niño acts as a force multiplier for heatwaves. In these years, the pre-monsoon heat starts earlier and lasts longer, with temperatures frequently breaching 45°C across the Indo-Gangetic plains.

Heat Stress and Mortality: Prolonged exposure to extreme heat leads to heatstroke, dehydration, and a spike incardiovascularemergencies.

The Urban Heat Island Effect: In cities like Delhi, Mumbai, and Bengaluru, concrete structures trap heat, making nights almost as oppressive as days.

Vector-Borne Diseases: Stagnant water during dry spells and erratic rain bursts can create breeding grounds for mosquitoes, leading to outbreaks of Dengue and Malaria.

Investing in micro-irrigation like drip systems can save up to 40% water in farming. Diversifying crops beyond rice and wheat reduces water stress. Urban greening, including protecting wetlands, helps cities stay cooler and absorb excess water.

Strategic Pointers for Future Resilienc

- Investment in Micro-Irrigation: Shifting from flood irrigation to drip systems can save up to 40% of water in agriculture.
- Diversifying the Food Basket: Reducing the national obsession with rice and wheat can lower the pressure on water
- Urban Greening: Cities must mandate green belts and protect existing wetlands to act as natural "sponges" and "coolants."
- Strengthening Social Safety Nets: Ensuring that the most vulnerable—daily wage earners and small farmers—have access to immediate financial aid during extreme weather events.

FINAL THOUGHTS: A CALL FOR COLLECTIVE RESILIENCE

The Super El Niño is a formidable adversary, but it is not an invincible one. It exposes the fractures in our systems—from our aging power grids to our over-reliance on groundwater. However, it also offers an opportunity to innovate.

As we look toward a future where these events may become more common, the goal must be to build a "Climate-Smart India.

" This involves a shift in mindset: seeing water as a finite treasure rather than an infinite resource, and viewing climate adaptation not as a cost, but as an investment in our collective future.

The monsoon will always be India's lifeblood.

By respecting its cycles and preparing for its disruptions, we can ensure that even when the Pacific warms and the rains falter, the spirit of the nation remains resilient. The era of the Super El Niño is here; how we respond will define the prosperity of the coming generations.

Shielding the Nation: Government Preparedness

Shielding Nation from Super El Niño Risks

India is strengthening its preparedness to tackle the growing threat of a Super El Niño with a shift from relief to long-term resilience. Improved early warning systems by the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) now provide timely forecasts, helping farmers and urban planners take preventive steps. Crop protection schemes like the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana offer financial security to farmers facing climate-related losses.

Managing a Super El Niño requires a multi-pronged strategy that moves from "relief" to "resilience."

Early Warning Systems: The Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) has significantly improved its forecasting accuracy, giving farmers and city planners more time to prepare.

Crop Insurance: Schemes like the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana are crucial for cushioning farmers against total financial ruin.

Disaster Management: States are increasingly adopting "Heat Action Plans," which include setting up cooling centers, adjusting school timings, and ensuring water availability in public spaces.

QUICK READ

Musk on White House correspondents' dinner shooting

Washington
A shooting incident at the annual White House Correspondents' Dinner has triggered widespread concern over political violence in the United States, with billionaire entrepreneur Elon Musk issuing a sharp reaction to the attack. Musk took to social media platform X to condemn the incident, saying it reflected a dangerous trend. They are willing to die to kill the democratically elected president, he wrote, referring to the shooting that disrupted the high-profile gathering attended by Donald Trump and senior US officials. The incident unfolded at the Washington Hilton hotel in Washington, D.C., where a 31-year-old suspect allegedly armed with multiple weapons, including a shotgun and handgun, attempted to breach a Secret Service checkpoint.

Piyush Goyal to meet exporters as West Asia crisis hits shipments

New Delhi
Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal will hold a crucial meeting with export promotion councils and industry bodies on April 27 to discuss strategies to boost outbound shipments, amid growing concerns over declining exports and geopolitical disruptions. The meeting comes at a time when Indian exporters are facing headwinds due to the ongoing tensions in West Asia, triggered by the conflict involving the US, Israel and Iran. Industry sources said the situation has disrupted trade routes, with shipping companies becoming increasingly reluctant to operate in parts of the Middle East, a key destination for Indian exports. The interaction with exporters will take place shortly after India and New Zealand sign their much-anticipated free trade agreement at Bharat Mandapam.

Titan eyes Rs 800 crore sports watch market with Zero Hour launch

New Delhi
Titan Company is looking to tap into India's growing performance sports watch segment, pegged at around Rs 800 crore, with the launch of its new sub-brand 'Zero Hour'. According to Rahul Shukla, Vice President and Chief Sales and Marketing Officer of Titan's watches division, the segment is expanding at a healthy 13–14% CAGR, driven by a younger demographic and increasing focus on fitness-oriented purchases. As part of its entry into this space, Titan has introduced a range of professional diving watches with water resistance levels from 100 to 500 metres, priced between Rs 15,795 and Rs 77,995. The company aims to position these offerings competitively against global brands while maintaining affordability. Shukla highlighted that Titan plans to expand further into performance categories, including field and pilot watches. The move aligns with Titan's broader ambition to scale its watches business to $1 billion by FY27 and $2 billion by FY30, amid a Rs 26,000 crore domestic watch market.

U.S. Consumer Sentiment Hits Record Low Amid Inflation Fears Linked to Iran Conflict

Consumer confidence in the United States has dropped to its lowest level on record in April, as households remain deeply concerned about rising prices despite a ceasefire in the conflict with Iran.

WASHINGTON

According to the University of Michigan's Surveys of Consumers, the Consumer Sentiment Index fell to a final reading of 49.8 in April. Although this figure was slightly higher than the preliminary estimate of 47.6 earlier in the month, it still marks the lowest level ever recorded. Economists had expected a modest improvement to 48.0, but the data reflects a broader decline in confidence compared to March's reading of 53.3.

The drop in sentiment was observed across political affiliations and among individuals with stock market investments, indicating widespread concern about the economic outlook. Analysts suggest that the ongoing effects of the Iran conflict have played a central role in shaping consumer perceptions.

Disruptions in global energy supply have been a key factor. The conflict has affected shipping through the Strait of Hormuz, a critical passage for global oil and gas transport. As a result, oil prices have surged, leading to higher costs for gasoline and diesel in the United States. In addition, prices for essential commodities such as fertilizers, petrochemicals, and aluminum have also risen, raising concerns about broader inflationary pressures.

Iran effectively restricted access to the strait following the outbreak of hostilities on February 28. While Donald Trump recently extended a ceasefire with Iran indefinitely, a U.S. naval blockade on Iranian ports remains in place, continuing to strain supply chains and energy markets.

Joanne Hsu noted that consumers are primarily reacting to tangible economic impacts rather than diplomatic developments. She explained that rising fuel prices and the potential for further cost increases are shaping household expectations more than ceasefire announcements or military shifts.

The data underscores a key challenge for policymakers: restoring consumer confidence in an environment where global conflicts are directly influencing domestic economic conditions. Until energy prices stabilize and supply constraints ease, sentiment is likely to remain under pressure.

India Aims for Global Leadership in Emerging Technologies, Says Jitendra Singh

NEW DELHI

Addressing a global gathering of technology leaders, Singh emphasized the need for India to transition from a technology consumer to a creator and innovator.

Speaking virtually at the PAN-IIT Alumni Conference in Los Angeles, Singh highlighted that India stands at a crucial turning point in its development journey. He stressed that achieving technological sovereignty is essential not only for economic growth but also for safeguarding long-term strategic interests.

Singh linked this vision to India's broader national goal of becoming a developed nation by 2047. He noted that science, technology, and innovation will serve as the foundation for this transformation,

India must position itself as a global leader in critical and emerging technologies to secure its technological independence and strengthen its role in the evolving world order, Union Minister of State Jitendra Singh said on Sunday.

enabling India to expand its global influence while strengthening domestic capabilities.

The minister pointed to several areas where India has already made significant strides. These include advancements in the country's space program, rapid developments in biotechnology, and the rise of deep-tech startups. According to Singh, such progress demonstrates India's growing ability to compete in high-impact global sectors.

He also underscored the importance of the Indian diaspora, particularly alumni of the Indian Institutes of Technology, in bridging India with global innovation ecosystems. Their contributions through investments, mentorship, and collaborations have played a key role in accelerating India's technological and economic growth.

Acknowledging the legacy of IITs, Singh noted that their graduates have gone on to lead multinational corporations, drive advanced research, and influence policy decisions worldwide. However, he emphasized that the next phase of growth will depend on identifying and investing in frontier technologies.

Key sectors highlighted by the minister include semiconductors, artificial intelligence, robotics, and quantum technologies. He stated that these domains will be critical for ensuring national security, enhancing economic resilience, and maintaining global competitiveness in the years ahead.

Singh concluded by urging stakeholders to work collectively to position India at the forefront of innovation, ensuring that the country not only participates in but actively shapes the future of global technology.

Bangladesh startups face funding crunch as growth story loses steam

NEW DELHI

Bangladesh's once-thriving startup ecosystem is showing clear signs of strain, with funding drying up, companies scaling back operations, and even prominent firms struggling to meet basic obligations like paying salaries, a report has said.

The crisis came into sharp focus in early March when hundreds of employees protested outside the Jashore office of Chaldal over unpaid wages, with some workers claiming they had not been paid for up to four months, according to The Daily Star report.

The episode has raised fresh concerns about the health of a sector that was once seen as a symbol of the country's digital and economic rise.

Founded in 2013, Chaldal had emerged as a pioneer of online grocery delivery in Bangladesh, becoming a household name in urban areas.

The company reportedly raised around $40 million between 2015 and 2025 and expanded aggressively, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic, when its annual revenue surged to $55 million.

Chaldal's troubles reflect a broader downturn across the startup ecosystem, which flourished during the 2010s with the rise of companies such as bKash, ShopUp, Pathao, and Shohoz.

Global firms like Uber and foodpanda also entered the market, drawn by rapid digital adoption and strong economic growth.

At its peak, Bangladesh had over 1,200 active startups, with nearly 200 new ventures launching each year.

The sector attracted more than $1.12 billion in funding since 2010, largely driven by foreign investors.

The high point came in 2021, when startups raised over $434 million across 94 deals, including a landmark $250 million investment in bKash by SoftBank.

However, the momentum has since slowed sharply. By 2024, annual funding dropped to just $42 million across 41 deals, and in 2025, only 12 deals were recorded, bringing in around $124 million, the report stated.

Notably, nearly all of that funding came from a single $110 million deal backing SILQ Group, formed through the merger of ShopUp and Saudi-based Sary. Industry leaders said the downturn is the result of both global and domestic pressures.

India and New Zealand are poised to deepen their economic partnership as Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal and New Zealand's Trade and Investment Minister Todd McClay engaged with industry leaders in Agra ahead of the signing of a landmark Free Trade Agreement (FTA).

India, New Zealand Strengthen Trade Ties as FTA Set to Unlock New Opportunities

NEW DELHI

The development is expected to significantly boost bilateral trade and investment. During their visit to Agra, the ministers interacted with representatives from key sectors including leather and footwear, AYUSH, pharmaceuticals, medical devices, light engineering, and sports goods. The engagement highlighted the importance of collaboration between businesses from both nations in driving economic growth and innovation.

Goyal described the interaction as productive and also launched the Agra: World Capital of Footwear brand campaign. The initiative aims to showcase the craftsmanship of local artisans and women entrepreneurs while positioning Agra as a global hub for footwear sourcing, exports, and employment generation.

The upcoming India-New Zealand FTA is being seen as a major milestone that will unlock new opportunities across sectors. According to Goyal, the agreement aligns with the broader vision of Narendra Modi to build stronger, people-centric international partnerships while enhancing economic prospects for farmers, small businesses, and skilled professionals.

Under the agreement, New Zealand will eliminate tariffs on 100 percent of Indian exports, providing immediate duty-free access across all tariff lines. This marks a significant shift from the current structure, where tariffs of around 10 percent apply to several Indian goods such as textiles, leather products, ceramics, carpets, and automobile components. In return, India will reduce or remove tariffs on 95 percent of imports from New Zealand, while safeguarding sensitive sectors like dairy and certain agricultural products.

The FTA also includes a substantial investment commitment, with New Zealand expected to invest approximately 20 billion dollars in India over the next 15 years. This provision is aimed at strengthening infrastructure, industry, and long-term economic cooperation.

In addition, the agreement introduces provisions to enhance mobility for students and professionals. Indian students will be allowed to work part-time while studying in New Zealand, along with access to extended post-study work visas. A quota of 5,000 visas has also been established for skilled Indian professionals across sectors such as healthcare, engineering, education, and information technology.

McClay emphasized that India remains a strategic priority for New Zealand and encouraged businesses to explore joint ventures and investment opportunities. The agreement is expected to usher in a new phase of bilateral relations, fostering trade expansion, talent exchange, and deeper economic integration between the two countries.

Nepal's new govt probing infrastructure deals signed with China

KATHMANDU

China has used its economic ties with Nepal as a stepping stone for political interference in the Himalayan country, and several deals signed with the Asian giant are now being looked into with the new government taking over in Kathmandu.

In recent years, China's growing role in Nepal has moved beyond economic cooperation into areas that increasingly resemble strategic and political interference. From diplomatic pressure on issues related to Tibet and Taiwan to attempts at influencing internal decision-making, Beijing's footprint in Kathmandu has expanded significantly, according to an article published by the Institute for Conflict Research and Resolution (ICRR), a Delhi-based think tank.

It points out that during the tenure of K. P. Sharma Oli, Nepal signed several agreements with China, which were projected as transformative steps toward economic independence.

However, these deals are now being scrutinised by the country's new government to investigate why several China-linked projects initiated during the Oli era were stalled, delayed or effectively stopped without clear reasons.

The new government has also announced that no new agreements with China will be considered until a full review of these projects is completed.

The turning point in Nepal-China relations came between 2016 and 2018, when Nepal moved closer to Beijing under the Belt and Road Initiative. The Oli government projected these agreements as a historic opportunity to transform Nepal into a regional connectivity hub. However, these infrastructure projects were not always backed by realistic planning or financial clarity, which sowed the seeds for future delays and complications.

In the list of stalled projects, the article lists the Budhi Gandaki Hydropower Project, awarded to China Gezhouba Group in May 2017, which was cancelled in November 2017, reinstated in 2018 and has remained effectively frozen since 2022 with no meaningful progress.

Gig workers' body urges govt to enforce heatwave protections amid rising temperatures

NEW DELHI

As scorching temperatures grip large parts of India, a national body representing gig and platform workers has urged the government to introduce enforceable heatwave protections.

The Indian Federation of App-Based Transport Workers has written to the Ministry of Labour and Employment, seeking the introduction of binding safeguards under the Code on Social Security, 2020. The legislation governs social security entitlements for gig and platform workers across the country.

In its letter, the federation proposed a series of measures aimed at protecting workers from the harsh impact of heatwaves.

These include paid cooling breaks during orange and red heat alerts issued by the India Meteorological Department, along with safeguards against penalties, ID blocks, or reduced incentives if workers pause duties due to extreme heat.

The federation has also called for mandatory access to drinking water, oral rehydration salts, and cooling shelters for workers operating in high temperatures.

Additionally, it recommended the introduction of in-app emergency distress systems and public compliance dashboards to ensure accountability among aggregators.

Highlighting the urgency of the issue, IFAT noted that delivery personnel, ride-hailing drivers, and home-service workers continue to operate under severe heatwave conditions without adequate protections, exposing them to serious health risks.

To strengthen its case, the federation pointed to international examples, noting that countries such as South Korea, Singapore, France, Japan, the United Arab Emirates, and the US state of California have already implemented similar protections for platform workers.

Sudharsan's 87 Powers Gujarat Titans to Win Over CSK

Ruturaj Gaikwad's unbeaten 74 goes in vain as GT win thriller match

CHENNAI

Gujarat Titans defeated Chennai Super Kings by eight wickets in a convincing IPL 2026 encounter at the MA Chidambaram Stadium on Sunday, riding on a superb unbeaten knock from Sai Sudharsan and a strong start by Shubman Gill.

CSK, batting first after losing the toss, were restricted to 158 for 7 in 20 overs despite skipper Ruturaj Gaikwad anchoring the innings with an unbeaten 74 off 60 balls.

Gujarat Titans' chase was clinical, as Sudharsan smashed 87 off 46 balls and shared a match-winning partnership with Jos Buttler to seal the win with 16 balls remaining.

Earlier, CSK's middle order collapsed under pressure from Kagiso Rabada and Mohammed Siraj, who shared five wickets and broke the backbone of the batting lineup in the powerplay.

The victory helped Gujarat Titans strengthen their position in the points table, while CSK will need to regroup quickly to keep their playoff hopes alive in the tournament.

Sudharsan, who was named Player of the Match, said he was happy to contribute to the team's success and credited the bowling unit for restricting CSK to a chaseable total.

Shubman Gill praised the collective effort, stating that the bowlers set the tone early and the batters executed the chase with discipline. CSK captain Ruturaj Gaikwad admitted that the early collapse cost them the game despite his unbeaten effort.

GT now move up the table, boosting their playoff chances significantly after this important away win in Chennai.

KV Prabhakar inspires youth at Kolar Kanaka Basketball Club's 38th summer camp

CH NEWS, KOLAR

The Kanaka Basketball Club in Kolar, established in 1958, continues its long-standing legacy of promoting sports and nurturing young talent through sustained training and competitive exposure. Over the years, the club has successfully organised more than 35 tournaments at district, state, All India and South Zone levels, earning a strong reputation in the sporting community. It also hosted a successful state-level tournament in 2023.

Currently, the club is conducting its 38th free summer coaching camp, with more than 120 children participating enthusiastically. The camp aims to provide structured basketball training along with physical fitness and discipline to young aspirants from the region.

As part of the daily support system, nutritional assistance is being provided to all participants. Milk is supplied by Kolar Dairy, while eggs and bananas are distributed by club office bearers. Every Sunday, additional snacks are also provided to ensure the children receive balanced nutrition during the intensive training schedule. The initiative has been made possible under the guidance of club president and Media Advisor to the Chief Minister K V Prabhakar, whose leadership has been widely appreciated by members and parents of participants.

The programme held on the day was attended by Kolar District Basketball Association president and former municipal council president Shri Prakash as the chief guest. Other dignitaries included vice-president Ganganna, secretary Ancha Ashwath, Bharath, Amar, Balu, Praveen Kumar, Santosh Singh, Vinay, and coaches Raghavendra, Manjunath, Kailash and Beerappa. Addressing the gathering, president K V Prabhakar motivated the young players to utilise the opportunity fully and develop discipline, dedication, and sportsmanship. The club continues to play a key role in promoting basketball in the region and building future athletes through consistent community-driven initiatives.

Consistent runs key to India comeback, says Ishan Kishan

SRH skipper credits persistence, hunger, aggressive batting for national team return

JAIPUR

Ishan Kishan has said that only consistent performances with the bat can pave the way for a return to the Indian team, reflecting on his journey back into the national setup after a challenging phase.

The wicketkeeper-batter, who was dropped in 2024 and lost his BCCI central contract, made a strong comeback in 2026 through impressive domestic performances. His standout run in the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy earned him a recall for the upcoming ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026.

Kishan said he avoided self-pity during his time away from the team. Instead, he focused entirely on improving his game and scoring runs.

"It's easy to feel bad when you are out, but that won't take you anywhere. Only runs can bring you back," he said, underlining the importance of performance over emotions. He stressed that consistency remains the key to selection, adding that players must push themselves to achieve higher standards season after season.

Kishan also highlighted how his time away from international cricket changed his mindset. According to him, being out of the team made him value every opportunity more and increased his hunger to perform. He added that he worked on becoming a better batter, even if it meant adopting a more aggressive approach at the crease.

In the match, Rajasthan Royals posted a formidable 228/6, powered by a blistering 103 off 37 balls by young sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi and a half-century from Dhruv Jurel.

In reply, Sunrisers Hyderabad chased down the target in 18.3 overs, thanks to a crucial 132-run partnership between Kishan (74 off 31) and Abhishek Sharma (57 off 29). Contributions from Heinrich Klaasen and Nitish Kumar Reddy ensured a comfortable victory.

Kishan summed up his journey by reiterating that in cricket, comebacks are always possible—but only through consistent performance.

Fielding lapses, PowerPlay bowling cost DC: Venugopal Rao

NEW DELHI

Venugopal Rao has pointed to poor catching and ineffective PowerPlay bowling as the main reasons behind Delhi Capitals' six-wicket loss to Punjab Kings in the Indian Premier League 2026.

Despite posting a record 264 for two, powered by a sensational unbeaten 152 from KL Rahul, Delhi Capitals failed to defend the total at the Arun Jaitley Stadium. Punjab Kings chased down the target with seven balls to spare in a high-scoring encounter.

Rao expressed disappointment over his team's fielding, which he described as a decisive factor. "Fielding let us down. We dropped almost six catches today. When you are dropping chances at crucial moments, especially of players like Prabhsimran Singh, Priyansh Arya, and Shreyas Iyer, you won't win matches like these," he said.

The missed opportunities proved costly as the Punjab batters capitalised fully, turning the game in their favour. Rao emphasised that such lapses in high-pressure matches can undo even the strongest batting performances. Another major concern was Delhi's bowling during the PowerPlay. The hosts conceded a staggering 116 runs without taking a wicket in the first six overs, allowing Punjab's openers to dominate from the outset. Rao noted that the early momentum gained by the opposition made it difficult for his team to regain control later in the innings.

He also highlighted the absence of Lungi Ngidi, who left the field due to injury during the chase, as a significant setback.

Deepti's maiden five-wicket haul powers India to win over SA

JOHANNESBURG

Deepti Sharma delivered a brilliant all-round performance, including her maiden five-wicket haul in T20 Internationals, to guide India to a 14-run victory over South Africa women's cricket team in the fourth match of the series.

Although South Africa had already sealed the series 3-0, India produced a spirited display to register a consolation win. Batting first, India posted 185 for five, a competitive total built on crucial middle-order contributions. India's innings saw early setbacks with Shafali Verma and Anushka Sharma departing cheaply. However, skipper Harmanpreet Kaur (22) and Jemimah Rodrigues (43) steadied the innings with a 55-run partnership.

DC pacer suffers fall, traffic police ensure rapid emergency response

Ngidi stable after head injury, green corridor speeds hospital transfer

NEW DELHI

Lungi Ngidi, pacer for Delhi Capitals, is stable and expected to be discharged soon after sustaining a head injury during an Indian Premier League 2026 match against Punjab Kings.

The South African fast bowler was taken off the field in an ambulance after he fell awkwardly while attempting a catch at the Arun Jaitley Stadium. Ngidi misjudged a shot from Punjab opener Priyansh Arya off Axar Patel and landed on his back, with the back of his head hitting the ground, leaving him in visible discomfort.

Medical staff rushed to his aid immediately as he clutched his head. Though conscious and responsive, Ngidi complained of headache and neck pain and was stretchered off the field for further evaluation. He was transported to BLK-Max Super Speciality Hospital for treatment. According to IPL officials, the 30-year-old underwent a CT scan, which returned normal results. He is currently under observation by a neurosurgeon, and if all parameters remain stable, he is likely to be discharged shortly. In the meantime, Vipraj Nigam was brought in as a concussion substitute.

The incident also saw swift coordination by the Delhi Traffic Police, who created a green corridor to ensure the ambulance's rapid movement through heavy traffic. Officials said they received information about the medical emergency during the match and immediately coordinated with organisers.

Under the supervision of ACP Traffic (Central District) Sanjay Singh, a dedicated route was cleared, allowing the ambulance to reach the hospital in just 11 minutes despite peak-hour congestion.

Players including Tristan Stubbs, David Miller, and coaches Ricky Ponting and Hemang Badani were seen checking on Ngidi as he was taken off the field.

The timely medical response and coordinated traffic effort ensured that the player received immediate care, highlighting the importance of emergency preparedness during high-profile sporting events.

Dhoni fit but delaying return to avoid disrupting CSK combination: Report

CHENNAI

MS Dhoni is reportedly fit again after recovering from a calf injury but has chosen to delay his return for Chennai Super Kings in the Indian Premier League 2026 to avoid disturbing the team combination. According to reports, the 44-year-old has successfully completed his fitness test and has been actively participating in practice sessions, including wicketkeeping drills. However, he is said to be reluctant to replace a younger player in the playing XI, especially with the team approaching crucial fixtures, including their clash against Gujarat Titans.

Dhoni, who has missed multiple matches this season after suffering the injury in late March, remains a central figure in discussions around the franchise. Despite his absence, the decision regarding his return reportedly rests entirely with him.

PADIKKAL'S RISE: From domestic dominance to IPL impact

BENGALURU

Devdutt Padikkal has underlined the value of simplicity and self-belief in scripting a remarkable rise from domestic dominance to impactful performances in the Indian Premier League 2026. The stylish left-hander, representing Royal Challengers Bengaluru, has carried his prolific domestic form into the IPL, emerging as a key contributor this season. His consistency across formats earlier in the year laid the foundation, with impressive numbers in the Ranji Trophy, Vijay Hazare Trophy, and Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy. Padikkal's recent 27-ball 55 against Gujarat Titans at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium showcased his evolution as a batter. While Virat Kohli starred with a commanding 81, Padikkal's innings stood out for its blend of elegance and controlled aggression, highlighted by a flurry of sixes—an aspect he admits is not usually his strength. "The biggest plus for me is the number of sixes I hit," Padikkal said, reflecting on what he described as one of his best IPL knocks so far.

Vimalslams BWF scoring change, calls it 'dilution' of badminton

NEW DELHI

Former India coach Vimal Kumar has strongly criticised the Badminton World Federation (BWF) for its decision to overhaul the sport's scoring system, terming it a "dilution" that fails to address core issues.

The BWF recently approved a shift from the long-standing 21-point format to a 3x15 scoring system during its Annual General Meeting in Horsens, Denmark. The new system is set to be implemented from January 4, 2027, after receiving the required two-thirds majority support from council members.

Reacting sharply, Vimal expressed deep disappointment, arguing that the existing format ensured a fair contest across different playing styles, particularly in singles—the format he believes best represents the essence of badminton.

"The 21-point system reflects skill, endurance, resilience and mental strength.

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